

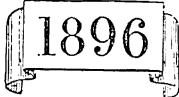


CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR LITERATURE

Science and Arts





1896



W. & R. CHAMBERS, LIMITED

LONDON & EDINBURGH



Edinburgh :
Printed by W. & R. Chambers, Limited.

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CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 627.—VOL. XIII.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 4, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

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PROLOGUE.

ON a certain evening of July, in the year of grace 1804, old John Burnikel sat in his own chair—that with arms and a high back—in his own place—the summer place—outside the Long Room of the Red Lion Tavern. This old tavern, which, they say, was once visited by King Charles the First, when he hunted a deer across the Whitechapel meadows, and took a drink on the steps of this hostelry, still stands: it is built of wood, like most of the old houses on the River Wall. It had then, and has now, a tumble-down and rickety appearance; the upper windows project, and are either askew or askew; the gables stand out high above the red-tiled roof which for two hundred years has threatened to sink in; there are buildings which project over the river, and have looked for two hundred years as if they were falling into it; the place has never got as much painting as it should have: the half-obliterated sign hangs creaking on rusty iron hinges; as it was in 1804, so it is now, tottering but never falling; ready to drop to pieces, but never actually dropping to pieces.

The red blinds in the window, seen from the river, looked inviting in summer; looked warm and comforting on a cold winter's eve. From many a ship making its slow way up the river there were wafted signs of satisfaction that Wapping and the Red Lion Tavern and old John Burnikel could be seen once more.

The Long Room is on the first floor, a room running through the whole depth of the house, with one great window on the north, and

another opening from floor to ceiling on the south. From the window on the north side could (in 1804) be seen in spring a lovely view of the trees and hedges of Love-lane and the broad orchards all white and pink with blossoms of apple, pear, and plum, which stretch away to the ponds and fields of Whitechapel and to the tall buildings of the London Hospital.

The tavern, from that window, seemed to be some rural retreat far from the noisy town. In the winter, when the company gathered round the roaring fire, with shutters close, drawn blinds, and candles lit, there was no pleasanter place for the relaxation of the better sort, nor any place where one could look for older rum or neater brandy, not to speak of choice Hollands, which some prefer to rum. For summer enjoyment there was a balcony or terrace overhanging the river where the company might sit and enjoy the spectacle of the homeward-bound ships sailing up, and the outward-bound sailing down, and the loading and unloading with lighters and barges innumerable in midstream.

The tavern stood beside Execution Dock, and the company of drinkers might sometimes, if they pleased, witness a moving spectacle of justice done on the body of some poor sailor wretch—murderer—mutineer—or pirate—who was tied to a stake at low tide, and was then left to wait expecting Death, who dragged his cruel feet and lingered, while the tide slowly rose, and little by little washed over his chin and gently lapped over his lips, and so crept higher and higher till, with relentless advance,

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it flowed over his nostrils, and with eyes of agony and horror the dying man was dead. Then the tide rose higher still, and presently flowed over his head and left no sign of the dreadful thing below.

There had been no execution on this day. John Burnikel sat on the terrace, the time being eight in the evening, before a table on which was a bowl of punch, his nightly drink. With him, one on each side, sat his two grand-nephews, first cousins, partners in the firm of Burnikel & Burnikel, boat-builders, of Wapping High Street—Robert and George Burnikel. The rest of the company consisted of certain reputable tradesmen of Wapping and one or two sea-captains.

At this time John Burnikel was an extremely ancient person. His birth, in fact, as recorded in the register of St John's Chapel, Wapping, took place in the year 1710. It was not everybody who knew that date, but everybody knew that he had far surpassed the limits accorded to man. Nobody in the parish, for instance, could remember any time when John Burnikel was not visible, and walking about, an old man as it seemed in a time when, to this riverside people, greatly addicted as they were to rum, a man at fifty was accounted old. Nor could anybody remember the time when he was not to be found every evening in the Long Room of the Red Lion, or on the terrace overlooking the river.

Old or not, he walked erect and briskly; he looked no more than sixty; his features were not withered or shrunken, or sharpened; he had no look of decrepitude; he had preserved his teeth and his hair; the only sign of age was the network of wrinkles which time had thrown over his face. And when he walked home at night he brandished his trusty club with so much resolution, and in his old arm there was still so much strength, that, though the place was lawless, and robberies and assaults were common, and although he walked through the streets every night alone, at ten o'clock, nobody ever molested him. Such is the virtue of a thick stick, which is far better than sword or pistol, if a man hath a reputation for readiness in its handling.

The old man lived in one of the small houses of Broad Street, an old cottage with four rooms, with diamond panes in the window, and a descent of a foot or so from the street into the front room. The house at the back looked out upon the open expanse of orchards and market-gardens, with a distant prospect of Whitechapel Mount. He lived quite alone, and he 'did' for himself, scrubbing his floors, personally conducting the weekly wash, and cooking his own food. This was simple, consisting almost entirely of beefsteaks, onions, and bread, with beer by the gallon. When he had cooked and served and eaten his breakfast or dinner, and when he had cleaned up his frying-pan and his plates, the old man would sit down in his arm-chair and go to sleep, in winter by the fire, in summer outside, in his backyard. He had no books, and he wanted none; he had no friends except at the tavern, and was cheerful without them. At the tavern, however, whither John Burnikel repaired at nightfall, or about six o'clock every evening, he was friendly, hos-

pitabile, and full of talk, drinking, taking his tobacco, and conversing with the other frequenters of the house; and since he was generous, and often called for bowls of punch, grog around, and drams, so that many an honest fellow was enabled to go home drunk who would otherwise have gone home sober, he was allowed and even encouraged to talk and to tell his adventures over and over again as much as he pleased. To do him justice, he was always ready to take advantage of this license, and never tired of relating the perils he had encountered, the heroism he had displayed, and the romantic manner in which he had acquired his riches.

For the old man boasted continually of his great riches, and in moments of alcoholic uplifting he would declare that he could buy up the whole of the company present, and all Wapping to boot, if he chose, and be none the worse for it. These were vapourings; but a man who could afford to spend every day from five to ten shillings at the tavern—drinking the best and as much as he could hold of it, treating his friends, freely ordering bowls of punch—must needs possess means far beyond those of his companions. For Wapping, though there were in it substantial boat-builders, rope-makers, block-makers, sail-makers, instrument-makers, and others connected with the trade and shipping of the Port of London, was not in those days a rich quarter.

The wealthy London merchants, who had houses at Mile End, Hoxton, Bow, Ham, and even Ratcliffe, never chose Wapping for a country residence; and, indeed, the riverside folk from St Katherine's by the Tower as far as Shadwell were, as a whole, a rough, rude, and dishonest people, without knowledge, without morals, without principle, without religion. The mob, however, found not their way to the Long Room of the Red Lion Tavern.

He was always called John Burnikel. Not Captain Burnikel, as was the common style and title of ancient mariners; nor Mr Burnikel, as belonged to business men, but plain John Burnikel, without any title at all. And so he had been called, I say, during the whole length of time remembered by the oldest inhabitants, except himself, of Wapping; and this was nearly seventy years.

It was a romantic history that the old man had to tell. He was the son of a boat-builder—a Wappinger—that was well known and certain; the business was still conducted by those two grand-nephews. At an early age he had run away to sea; this was also perfectly credible, because all the lads of Wapping who possess any generous instincts always do run away to sea or become apprentices on board ship. No one doubted that John Burnikel was an old sailor. He said that he had risen to be mate on an East Indiaman; this may have been true, but the statement wanted confirmation. His manner and habits spoke perhaps of the foc'sle rather than the quarter-deck, but then there are quarter-decks where the manners are those of the foc'sle. However, in the year 1804 nobody cared whether this part of his history was true or not, and at the present moment, ninety years after, it is of still less importance.

On the visit of a stranger, or on any holiday or on any festive occasion, John Burnikel was wont to relate at great length and with many flourishes and continually new embroideries, the series of adventures which enabled him to return to England at an early age—not more than five-and-twenty—the possessor of a handsome fortune. It would take too long to relate this history entirely in the old man's words. Besides which history—told on which evening—should be selected? Suffice it to say that while it was in progress the company finished the bowl, ordered another, and sometimes finished that while the narrative proceeded. For listening without talking is thirsty work, and a thirsty man must drink or die. And since the punch was paid for by the old man, 'twould be the neglecting of chances and opportunities not to take as much of it as the rest of the company allowed.

The substance of the earlier part of the story was this. John Burnikel was on board the East Indiaman, the *Hooghly*, bound from the Port of London to Calcutta. She had a goodly company of passengers, and was laden with a miscellaneous cargo. They fell into a hurricane in the Indian Ocean; the ship was dismasted, and lost her rudder and her boats: she drifted helpless for many days, and at last struck on a rock. When, after dangers and difficulties of the most extraordinary kind, John Burnikel found himself on shore at last, he was alone, naked, destitute, and helpless on a hostile coast, the people of which, he declared, were notorious cannibals.

They did not, however, proceed to eat him; on the contrary, they clothed him, fed him, and presently took him up-country as a present, presumably, to the kitchen of their king, 'or, as in their jargon they call him, gentlemen, their Rajah.'

Here he would break off to reflect upon the situation. Every story-teller loves to take advantage of the reflections suggested by a situation. 'Gentlemen,' he would say, 'tis a melancholy thing to find yourself growing every day fatter and more ready for the spit; and even the honour of being reserved for the private larder of His Majesty could not make me cheerful. What, I ask you, is the idle honour of being served at the table of royalty when one thinks of what you must go through in order to get there? I used to compare, gentlemen, in my own mind, that portion of me which might be on the dish—a sirloin, or a brisket, or a saddle—with a leg or a loin of roast pork; and I would remember that, in order for us to get that toothsome loin, the animal must first be stuck. 'Twas, I confess, mortifying to reflect that sticking must be undergone.

'Gentlemen, with the utmost joy I discovered that this Prince was too great and too high-minded to be a cannibal. Children of tender years, indeed, as we take sucking-pig, he might welcome at his table; but not a sailor grown up and tough. He received me, on the other hand, with a gracious kindness which I cannot forget; he gave me an important office about his person—that of Hereditary Grand Mixer of the Royal Punch—a most responsible office, with

a uniform of red silk and a turban stuck all over with diamonds. This, gentlemen, is the Court uniform of that country. Here we know not what uniform means for splendour.'

The story from this point varied from day to day. Let us select the version most in use. He rendered some signal service to His Majesty—the nature of which was differently told; in fact it was impossible to reconcile the various narratives. For he discovered a conspiracy, revealed the conspirators at their work, and saved the King and the Dynasty. Or he rescued the King's daughter from a fierce man-eating tiger; or he captured the kidnappers who were running off with that daughter; or he snatched the whole of the Harem from a consuming fire; or he healed them all of a dangerous sickness by administering tar-water. In fact, John Burnikel had a most lively imagination and used it freely. Choose, therefore, the kind of service which you think most worthy of a great reward.

'For this service, gentlemen, the Great Mogul showed the gratitude of a Christian. He sent for me, and when I fell upon my knees, which is the only way that His Majesty can be approached, he stepped down from his golden throne and bade me graciously to rise. Then he created me on the spot, a Duke, or a Lord Mayor—I forget which. This done, they gave me a splendid cloak to wear. And then—for the best was yet to come—the Emperor bade me prepare for something unexpected. Ah!' Here he drew a long breath. 'Unexpected indeed! With that he led me through the golden halls of his palace; crowded with dancing girls, till he came to a place where there was a heavy door. "Unlock it," says the King. So the door was opened and we went down a few steps till we came to an underground hall. If you'll believe me, gentlemen, that hall hadn't need of candles to light it up. It was full of light; it dazzled one's eyes only to stand there and look around; full of its own light, for it was full of precious stones, heaps of 'em; boxes of 'em, shelves of 'em, strings of 'em, there they were—diamonds, rubies, pearls, emeralds, opals—every kind of precious stone that grows anywhere in the world. Gentlemen, there was a sight. The diamonds came from the Emperor's own diamond ground—Golconda, they call it—where I've been. I will tell you some day about Golconda. The rubies were brought by the King's armies from Burma. I've been to Burma, and I'll tell you about the people there some day; cruel torturers they are. The pearls came from Ceylon, where they are got by diving. I've been a famous diver myself, and I'll tell you, if you ask me to-morrow, how I fought the shark under water; you don't know what a fight is like till you tackle a shark under water, with the conger and the cuttle and the cod fish looking on! As for the emeralds, I don't rightly know how they got there. I have heard of a mountain in South America which is just one great emerald, and at certain times the natives go with hammers and chop off little bits. I'll go out there next year to see it. However, gentlemen, there we were, the Great Mogul and me standing in the middle of these treasures. "Jack," says he, "you shan't say

that the King of India is ungrateful. For the service you have done me, I say—help yourself. Fill your pockets. Carry out all you can!" And I did. Gentlemen, it is seventy years ago and more, and still I could cry only to think that my pockets were not sacks. However, I did pretty well—pretty well; weigh me against any Lord Mayor of London you like, and you would say that I did very well. Better still, I brought these stones home with me. Best of all, I've got 'em still. When I want money I take one of my diamonds or a handful of pearls. Aha! You would like to know where I keep these jewels? Trust me; they are in safe keeping—all that's left of 'em—and that's plenty—in right, good safe keeping.'

Was not this a splendid, a romantic story to be told in Whitechapel by a simple old sailor? Nobody believed it, which mattered nothing so long as the punch lasted out. Yet the old man most certainly must have money, as he showed by his nightly expenditure alone, let alone the fact that for seventy years he had lived among them all at Wapping, and had done no single stroke of work. Among his hearers there sat every night these two grand-nephews of his; they were cousins, I have said, and partners in the boat-building business. They came, moved by natural affection—who would not love an uncle who might be telling the truth, or something like the truth, about these jewels? They also came to learn what the old man might reveal, which would be a clue to finding more; and they came out of jealousy, because each suspected the other of trying to supplant him in the favour of the uncle. They sat, therefore, and endured the company, which was not always of their own rank and station as respectable tradesmen; but still they got nothing for their trouble, because the old man told them no more than he told the rest of the world. Nor did he show the least sign of affection for either. Every evening when the cousins left the tavern, which was not until the old man had departed, one would say to the other, 'Cousin George, our uncle ages; he ages visible. I greatly fear that he is breaking.' And the other would reply, 'Cousin Robert, I greatly fear it too. Yet it is the way of all flesh.' These were times when every event was received in a spirit and with words proper to the occasion. 'We must resign ourselves to the impending blow.'

'Heaven grant'—the tribute to religion having been duly paid, they became natural again—'Heaven grant that we find the truth about these jewels. The story cannot be true.'

'Yet how has he lived for seventy years in idleness?'

'I know not; nor can I so much as surmise.'

'Consider, cousin. He lays out from eight shillings to ten or even twelve shillings every evening at the tavern. And there are his meals, and his rent besides. Say that he spends twelve shillings a day, or eighty-four shillings a week, which is two hundred and eighty-eight pounds eight shillings a year. In seventy years this makes the prodigious sum of fifteen thousand two hundred and eighty-eight pounds. Where did he get all that money? Cousin, he has

either a secret hoard somewhere, or he has property—houses, perhaps, of which we know nothing.'

'When he dies, I suppose we shall learn. A man cannot have his property buried with him.'

Now, one night, as the company at the tavern parted at ten o'clock, instead of shouldering his club and marching off, the old sailor turned to his nephews. 'Boys,' he said—he had never called them 'boys' before—'I have something to say. I had better say it at once, because, look you, I think I am getting old, and in a few score years, more or less, it may be too late to say it. Come with me, then, to my poor house in Broad Street.'

The nephews, greatly astonished and marveling much, followed him. They were going to be told something. What? The truth about the jewels? The nature of the property?

The old man led the way, brandishing his stick, stout and erect. He took them to his house, opened the door, closed it and barred it; got his tinder-box and obtained a light from a thick ship's tallow candle. Then he barred the window-shutter. His nephews looked round the room. It was the first time they had stood within those walls. There was a table and an arm-chair, a high arm-chair in which one could sit protected from the draughts by the fireside; there was a tobacco-box with two or three churchwarden pipes; there was a cupboard with plates; a kettle was on one side of the hob, and a pot on the other. There was no further furniture in the room. But the door and the window-shutters were thick and massive. And on the wall were hung a cutlass and a brace of pistols.

'Wait here a bit,' said the old man. He took the candle and carried it into the other room, leaving them in the dark. After a few minutes he returned bearing a small canvas sack.

TO-DAY IN JOHANNESBURG.

THE Transvaal and its wonderful cosmopolitan centre Johannesburg are just now of greater interest than ever. Emigration there from all enterprising civilised nations, especially of course from our own, is still on the increase. Let us see what the country with its capital is like—its people, life, commerce, and advantages for settlers. The question of its wretched political present and probable political future will, of course, be always before us till settled; for that a great future is in store for it, and that the present way in which it is governed can only last for a short time longer, is plain to any one who has the merest passing acquaintance with the country.

First to get there. The railway journey from Capetown to Johannesburg of about three days is through a seemingly endless, sandy country, with range succeeding range of distant mountains, all alike, and strikes a greater sense of vastness and desolation than an expanse of naked ocean itself. First and second class have sleeping accommodation, the third being kept for

blacks and the lowest class Dutch. Well, we reach Johannesburg, which has not even yet, with all its wealth, a covered-in railway station; whilst by way of contrast in the progress of the place, just across the road is a huge club, with tennis, cricket, football, and cycling grounds, gymnasium, military band, halls for dancing, operas, and oratorios, &c., which will bear comparison with any you please. Its members are millionaires and clerks, lodgers and their lodging-house keepers, all equal there; for we have left behind caste, cliques, and cathedral cities, and are cosmopolitan, or, in a word, colonial. An institution like this gives us the state of society there in a nut-shell, for, as wages are very high, any one in anything like lucrative employment can belong to it; and the grades in society are determined by money, and money only.

Johannesburg, the London of South Africa, which was nine years ago barren veldt, eight years ago a miners' camp, is now the centre of some one hundred thousand inhabitants, and increasing about as fast as bricks and mortar can be obtained. It is situated directly on top of the gold, and on looking down from the high ground above, it looks to an English eye like a huge, long-drawn-out mass of tin sheds, with its painted iron mine-chimneys running in a straight line all along the quartz gold-reef as far as you can see in either direction. The largest or main reef runs for thirty miles uninterrupted, gold-bearing and honeycombed with mines throughout. This, even were it alone, could speak for the stability and continued prosperity of the Transvaal gold-trade. On a mail-steamer arriving only a few days ago from the Cape was said to be between £300,000 and £400,000 worth of gold, and the newspapers show that usually about £100,000 worth is consigned by each mail-boat.

As we enter the town we find fine and well-planned streets, crossed at places with deep gutters—gullies rather—to carry off the water, which is often in the heavy summer rains deeper than your knees. Crossing these at fast trot, the driver never drawing rein, the novice is shot about, in his white-covered two-wheeled cab with its large springs, like a pea in a bladder. Indeed, one marvels at the daintily dressed *habitué* of the place being swung through similarly, quite unconcerned, and without rumpling a frill. We pass fine public buildings, very high houses and shops—some-what jerry-built, it is true, and goodness help them in the event of a large street-fire—but now being added to, or replaced by larger and more solid buildings. Indeed, bricks cannot be made fast enough for the demand, both there and in some of the outlying Transvaal towns where the 'gold boom' is on. There are lofty and handsome shops, with most costly contents, which can vie with London or Paris.

Let us watch from the high-raised stoep outside the Post-office, looking down over the huge market-square. What strikes us first are the two-wheeled two-horsed cabs with white hoods,

recklessly driven by Malays in the inseparable red fez, and these with the fast-trotting mule or horse wagons show the pace at which business or pleasure is followed. As a contrast comes the lumbering ox-wagon with ten or twelve span of oxen, a little Kaffir boy dragging and directing the leading couple by a thong round the horns, and the unamiable Dutch farmer revolving around, swearing, and using his fifteen-foot whip to keep the concern in motion at all. Then passes a body of some two hundred prisoners, Kaffirs, and a few whites leading, marched in fours by some dozen white-helmeted police and four or five mounted men, all paraded through the main streets, innocent and guilty alike, to the court-house, and many escaping *en route* as occasion offers. Well-dressed English men of business, and professional men, women in handsome and dainty costumes, hustle Jews of all degrees of wealth; carelessly dressed miners, and chaps in rags come in from prospecting or up-country, with the Dutchman everywhere in his greasy soft felt and blue tattered puggaree, Chinese shopkeepers, Italians, Poles, Germans; whilst outside in the roadways flows a continuous stream of Kaffirs in hats and cast-off clothing of every sort imagination can picture, who are not allowed by law to walk upon the pavement.

Long before daylight the square is full of ox-wagons, some from distances occupying days to traverse; and the buyers of forage, oats, corn, mealie-meal, firewood, poultry, eggs, &c., are busy as soon as they can see. Here the middle-man makes a good profit, often riding far out on the roads to get at the illiterate Dutch farmer before the latter reaches the market. Here is an amusing instance of a bargain recently overheard on the square. An English trader purchased a wagon-load of stuff from a Boer, and by means of a few figures and calculations easily tossed off, and with many flourishes, makes out that the amount he has to pay the Dutchman is about half of what it ought to be, if correctly reckoned up at the price agreed. 'Oom Paul' cannot reckon much, but has a Ready Reckoner, and points to and wants the larger amount. 'What's that?' says the other. 'Let's look at it.' Then, 'Why, that's *last year's* Ready Reckoner! Look here, man, it's marked 1894. It's no good now.' 'Allamachta!' says the Boer, 'I did not notice that;' and plods off home, wagon and all, content with the lesser sum.

No expense is spared in high living. A special fruit-train is run daily from Natal, and fish is brought enormous distances. All South African fish, however, are either tasteless, or of a milk-and-water or insipid flavour. The vegetable market opens each morning at dawn; at eight the lots are all sold by auction, and Malays pile up their carts and pannier-baskets to sell their stuff from house to house before the mid-day heat. In England meat is dear, and bread and vegetables cheap; in the Transvaal bread and vegetables are dear (a small roll, not large enough to be dignified with the name of loaf, costing sixpence), and meat is cheap. Now let us see what advantages the country has to offer to intending emigrants. To young fellows going out with a few hundreds to try their

luck, the old Australian's advice. I think, holds good for Africa—namely, to put your money into safety for a year, and not go into business or speculating until you know your country.

Johannesburg business morality is certainly not London business morality; and leading business men at the former place will tell you themselves that honesty is not expected there. For those who go to earn their livelihood, or to make money, I would say, do not go out without a fixed trade or handicraft, or money to start upon, or a good introduction to some friend already there. But remember that the Transvaal is a veritable Paradise for the working-man who knows his business. All the heavy part of the labour is put out: the Kaffirs do it, directed by him in a few Kaffir words, and generally many English expletives. Wages are paid monthly. Miners make their twenty-five or thirty pounds a month, if first-rate, and the blacks drill their holes for blasting where and as they order them. Carpenters, blacksmiths, masons can get about the same: and whenever a billet is lost or cannot be obtained, a short tramp along the mines generally brings success. Vacancies are constantly occurring, for miners, especially when full of money, are inclined to 'go on the burst,' and their places are ruthlessly filled up (on Monday mornings is the best time to apply) by new-comers, in order to keep the work going at fever-heat, and the output up to the mark. When in cash, these miners often spend six or eight pounds at a sitting, and twenty or thirty pounds in a day or two. A freemasonry exists amongst them, and when one gets into trouble with the authorities, half a dozen turn up to bail him out, or to pay the iniquitously heavy fine imposed by the cunning Dutch officials, who know they will be paid, as the alternative time is too valuable to the delinquent. The miners, except when close to Johannesburg or a town, live in white men's quarters built of wood and corrugated iron: and the mines succeed one another some few miles apart along the open veldt or plain, without a tree to break its barrenness, so the surroundings are grim and uninviting enough. Many miners have horses, many bicycles, the latter just the thing for the long, dry, sandy roads. They feed at a common boarding-house for five or six pounds a month, and sleep two, often four or more, in a small room. No class ever cared less for personal comforts. They pay highly, as money comes in so easily, and without grumbling. Their relaxation, as is natural in places so monotonous and unlovely, is dissipation, and so a steady man can save a small fortune in an incredibly short space of time. Most of those inclined to save have their banking accounts, and very large sums of money are sent monthly to wives and families at home.

Ten shillings for shoeing a horse should tempt a blacksmith. Go out, by all means, any one who has a trade and good health, and you have what is, in serious language, the best chance in the world of making money there. The utterly free life of South Africa has such a charm also, that, as all the colonists tell you, if once you put on the veldt schoons (untanned leather shoes) and drink 'Cape

Smoke' (local attempt at brandy), you will never leave the country; and it has a fascination which is believed invariably to attract back to it all who have been there.

AFTER THE FACT.*

By E. W. HORNUNG.

CHAPTER I.

It is my good fortune to cherish a remarkably vivid recollection of the town of Geelong. Others may have found the place quiet or even colourless enough to justify an echo of the cheap local sneer at its expense: to me, those sloping parallels of low houses have still a common terminus in the bluest of all Australian waters; and I people the streets, whose very names I have forgotten, with faces of extraordinary kindness, imperishable while memory holds her seat. So it is probable I should think no less affectionately of Geelong, even had I voted it in my time the dull town that I have heard it styled: but dull it certainly was not during the first few days of my visit, whatever may have been the case before or since. The period was, in fact, an epoch: and I may say at once that the epoch was none of my making. My connection with the singular events of that week was a pure accident, the result of one of those chance meetings which are the veriest commonplace of outlandish travel. It was a Monday afternoon when I arrived by the boat, to find the streets crowded and the populace greatly excited by a sudden run on one of the banks. On the Wednesday, another bank, which had notoriously received much of the money withdrawn from the Barwon Banking Company, Limited, was in its turn the victim of a still uglier fate: the Geelong branch of the Inter-colonial was entered in broad daylight by a man masked and armed to the beard, who stayed some ten minutes, and then walked into thin air with no less a sum than nineteen thousand and odd pounds in notes and gold.

I was playing lawn-tennis with my then new friends when we heard the news: and it stopped our game. The bank manager's wife, a friend of my friends, arrived herself upon the scene, incoherent with horror, and accompanied by her daughter. And I heard at first-hand a few broken, hysterical words from the white lips of an elderly lady, and noted the tearless trouble in the wide blue eyes of the girl, before it struck me to retire. The family had been at luncheon in the private part of the bank, and knew nothing of the affair until the junior clerk broke in upon them like a lunatic at large. He, too, had gone out for his lunch, and returned to find teller and cashier alike insensible, and the safe rifled. That was all I stayed to gather, save that the unhappy lady was agitated by a side issue far worse to her than the bank's loss. There had been no bloodshed. The revolver kept beneath the counter had been used, but used in vain. It was not loaded. Her husband would be blamed,

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may, discharged to a certainty in his old age. And I, too, walked down the street with the picture of an elderly couple brought to ruin, and a blue-eyed girl gone for a governess, appealing more to me than the immediately dramatic side of the incident.

I found my way to the Inter-colonial Bank; there was no need to ask it. A crowd clamoured at the doors, but these were shut for the day. And I learned no more than I already knew, save that the robber wore a black beard, and was declared by some to be a second Ned Kelly from the Strathbogie Ranges. Nor did I acquire more real information the rest of that day; nor hope for any when late at night I thought I recognised an old schoolfellow in the street.

'Deedes major!' I cried, without pausing to make certain; but I was certain enough when my man turned and favoured me with the stare of studied insolence which had made our house-master's life a burden to him some ten years before that night. Among a thousand, although the dark eyes were sunken and devil-may-care, the full lips hidden by a moustache with gray hairs in it, and the pale face prematurely lined, I could have sworn to Deedes major then.

'Don't know you from Adam,' said he. 'What do you want?'

'We were at school together,' said I. 'I was your fag when you were in the eleven; I oiled your bat when you made your century against the Free Foresters; I'm proud to meet you again.'

'Do tell me your name,' he said wearily; and at that moment I recollected (what had quite escaped my memory) his ultimate expulsion; and I stood confounded by my maladroitness.

'Bower,' said I, abashed.

'The Beetle!' cried Deedes, not unkindly; a moment later he was shaking my hand and smiling on my confusion. 'Hang school!' said he. 'Where are you staying?'

'Well,' said I, 'I'm supposed to be staying with some people I brought a letter of introduction to; but they hadn't a room for me, and insisted on getting me one outside; so that's where I am.'

'What's their name?' said Deedes; and, when I told him, he nodded, but made no further comment, beyond asking whether I would take him round to my room for a chat. The proposal delighted me; indeed it caused me a positive thrill, which I can only attribute to an insensible return of the small boy's proper attitude towards a distinguished senior. We were twenty-eight and twenty-four now, instead of eighteen and fourteen; but, as we walked, only one of us was a man, and I was once more his fag. I was proud when he accepted a cigarette from my case, prouder yet when he took my arm. The feeling stuck to me until we reached my room, when it suddenly collapsed. He had asked me what I was doing. I had told him of my illness and my voyage, and had countered with his own question. He laughed contemptuously, sitting on the edge of my bed.

'Clerk in a bank?' said he.

'Not the Inter-colonial?' I cried.

'That's it,' he answered, nodding.

'Then you were there to-day. This is luck; I've been so awfully keen to know exactly what happened!'

'I was not there,' replied Deedes. 'I was having my lunch. I can only tell you what I saw when I got back. There was our cashier sprawled across the counter, and the teller in a heap behind it—both knocked on the head. And there was the empty safe, wide open, with the sun shining into it like a bull's-eye lantern! No; I only wish I had been there: it's such a chance as I shall never get again.'

'You'd have shown fight?' said I, gazing at his long athletic limbs, and appreciating the force of his wish as I perceived in what threadbare rags they were imprisoned. 'Yes, you'd have stood up to the chap, I know; I can see you doing it!'

'There would have been nothing wonderful in that,' was the odd reply. 'I should have had everything to gain and nothing to lose.'

'Not your life?'

'That's less than nothing.'

'Nonsense, Deedes,' said I, although or because I could see that it was not. 'You don't mean a word of it!'

'I do—every word; but that's neither here nor there,' he answered. 'Give me another cigarette, Beetle; you were asking about the robbery, and, if you don't mind, we'll confine ourselves to that. I'm afraid old PAnson will get the sack; he's the manager, and responsible for the bank revolver being loaded. He swears it was; we all thought it was; but nobody had looked at it for weeks, and you see it wasn't. Yes, that's a rule in all banks in this country, where sticking them up is a public industry. The yarn about Ned Kelly's son? Well, there may be something in it. I've heard there is such a fellow, and a chip of the old block, too. But, if you ask me, we must look a little nearer home for the man who stuck up our bank this afternoon.'

'Nearer home?' said I. 'Then you think it was somebody who knew about the run upon the Barwon Banking Company, and the payments into the Inter-colonial?'

'Obviously; somebody who knew all about it, and perhaps paid in a big lump himself. That would be a gorgeous blind!' cried Deedes, greatly taken with his idea. 'Beetle, old chap, I wish I'd thought of it myself—only it would have meant boning the capital to begin with! I strongly suspect some of these respectable Geelongese and Barwonners of being at the bottom of the whole thing, though; they're so respectable. Beetle, there's bound to be villains among 'em! By Jove!' he added, getting to his feet with a sinister light in his handsome, dissipated countenance, 'I'll go for the reward when they put it up! Four figures it can't fall short of; that would be better than junior clerking for eighty pounds a year! And he walked up and down my room laughing softly to himself.

'I'll join you,' cried I. 'I'll go in for love, or honour and glory, and you shall pocket the £ s. d.'

'That be hanged!' said he, stopping in front

of me with a very penetrating scrutiny. 'But look here, Beetle, you used to be a well-plucked little 'un at school; will you join me in something else?'

'In what?' said I.

'In villainy,' he cried. 'In rank, unadulterated, wholesale villainy!'

'Deedes,' said I, smiling, 'what the dickens do you mean?'

'Mean? What I say, my dear Beetle—every word of it! What's the use of being honest? Look at me. Look at my shirt-cuffs, that I've got to trim every morning like my nails; look at my trousers, as I saw you looking at 'em just now. Those bags at the knees are honesty; and honesty's rapidly wearing them through on an office stool. I'm as poor as a rat; *that's* honesty, and I've had enough of it. Think of the fellow who walked off with that twenty thou. this morning, and then think of me. Wouldn't you like to be in his shoes? No? My stars, you don't know what it is to live, Beetle; honest idiots like us never do. But I'm going to turn it up. I've had enough of this. If one can play at that game, two can; why not three? Come on, Beetle; make a third, and we'll rob another bank to-morrow!'

'You're joking,' said I, returning his smile. 'Still, if I *was* going in for that sort of thing, Deedes, I don't know who I'd rather have on my side than you!'

He was grave and eager in an instant.

'Will you go in for it?' he cried. 'I'm joking far less than you think. My life's a sordid failure. I'm sick of it, and ready for a fling. Will you come in?'

'No,' said I, 'I won't.'

And we looked each other steadily in the eyes, until he led me back to laughter with as much ease as he had lengthened my face a moment before.

'All right, old Beetle,' said he. 'I won't chaff any more—not that it was all chaff by any means. I sometimes feel like that, and so would you in my place. Bunked from school! In disgrace at home! Sent out here to be got rid of—thrown away like a broken cup! The things I've done for a living during these ten years—this is the most respectable, I can tell you that. And it's the respectability drives me mad!'

His bitter voice, the lines upon his face, his gray hairs at twenty-eight (they were not confined to his moustache), all appealed to me with equal and irresistible force; my hand went out to him, and with it my heart.

'I am so sorry, Deedes,' said I nervously. 'If a fiver or two—yes, you must let me! For the sake of the old school!'

He shook his head, and the blood rushed to mine. I offered him a handsome apology, but he cut me short.

'That's all right, Beetle. It was well meant, and you're a good chap. We'll foregather to-morrow, if this wretched business leaves us a spare moment in the bank; meanwhile, good-night—and thanks!'

And he crept down the stairs at my request; for I was not in the position of an ordinary lodger; and having followed and closed the door noiselessly behind him, I returned as stealthily

to my room. I did not wish my hospitable friends to know that I had used lodgings, placed at my disposal as their guest, as though I had engaged them on my own account. After all, I was a guest, not a lodger; yet I had behaved as the latter, introducing a man at midnight, and sitting up in conversation with him until two o'clock in the morning. Deedes, moreover, as I suspected from his manner when I mentioned them, was most probably no friend of my friends; indeed, I had no clue to his reputation in the town, and should have been surprised to find it a good one. He had been a reckless boy at school; at the very least he was a reckless man. Other traits in him, too, must have developed with his years; he had been expelled, for instance, for certain gallantries, not criminal in themselves, but sufficiently demoralising at a public school; and, despite his clothes, I could have sworn those dark, uscrupulous eyes, and that sardonic, insolent, and yet attractive manner, had done due damage in Geelong.

For there was a fascination in the man, incommunicable on paper, and my despair as I write. He was a strong, selfish character, one with whom the will and the way were synonymous terms; yet there was that in him for which it is harder to find a name, which attracted while it repelled, which enforced admiration in its own despite, and strangled criticism at its birth. At school he had been immensely popular and a bad influence: at once a bugbear and an idol from the respective points of view of masters and boys. My own view was still that of the boy. I could not help it; nor could I sleep for thinking of our singular rencontre and interview. I undressed, but shirked my pillow. I smoked my pipe, but it did me no good. Finally, I threw up my window, and as I did so, heard a sound that interested, and another that thrilled me. The first was a whistle blowing in the distance; the second, an answering whistle, which made me jump, for it came from beneath the very window at which I stood.

I leaned out. A white helmet and a pair of white legs flashed under a lamp and were gone. My window was no impossible height from the ground, but I did not stay to measure it. With the whistles still in my ears I lowered myself from the sill, dropped into a flower-bed, and gave chase to the helmet and the legs, myself barefooted and in pyjamas.

I saw my policeman vanish round a corner. I was after him like a deer, and even as I ran the position amused me. Chasing the police! He could not hear my naked feet; I gained on him splendidly, and had my hand on his shoulder before he knew me to exist. His face, as he stopped and turned it, feeling for his pistol, I shall remember all my life.

'All right,' I cried. 'I'm not the man you're after. Hurry up! I'm coming along to see the fun.'

He swore in my teeth and rushed on. I stuck to him like a leech; he tried with vague threats to shake me off, but it was not to be done. All this time the first whistle was blowing through the night; we had reached the outskirts of the town, and were nearing the

sound; when suddenly, on turning a corner, we came upon another drill-trousered, pith-helmeted gentleman in the gateway of an empty house.

'That's about enough of us,' said he, pocketing his whistle. 'I've got a man already on the lawn at the back. The house is empty, and he's in it like a rat in a trap. But who's this you've brought along with you, mate?'

'A volunteer,' said I. 'Come, you won't refuse to let me lend a hand if I get the chance? Who is it you're after?'

'You'll get your brains blown out,' replied the constable who had given the alarm, and on whose sleeves I saw a sergeant's stripes. 'You'd best go home, though I won't say but what we want all the men we can get. The town's asleep—as usual. Can you face powder?'

'I'll see,' said I, laughing, for I scarcely suspected he was in earnest. 'Who is it you are after? Somebody very dangerous?'

'The Inter-colonial bank-robber,' replied the sergeant grimly. 'What do you say now?'

I said nothing at all. I know not what I had expected; but it was not this; and for the moment my own density concerned me as much as my fears.

'Oh, that's all right,' said the sergeant, with an intolerable sneer. 'You cut away and send along a grown man when you see one!'

My reply need not be recorded; suffice it that a moment later one of the men, who both carried firearms, had handed me his truncheon; and I was on my way to join the third constable on the lawn behind the house, while those two effected an entrance in front.

LEFT-HANDEDNESS.

By R. A. LUNDIE, M.D.

THE very name of *left-handed* carries with it a suggestion of disparagement—may one not say, almost of contempt? And it is so not in our own speech only, but in tongues in all quarters of the world, among peoples of all degrees of civilisation and savagery. It is no mere accident of our own language that the same word serves both as the opposite of *left* and as the opposite of *wrong*. A similar association of the left hand with inferiority, not merely physical awkwardness, but ill-luck, stupidity, and even moral delinquency, is found in many languages. Two of those from which ours has formed its vocabulary have supplied us in this way with uncomplimentary epithets which have in our common use of them quite lost their original meaning; we use the French *gauche* to describe ungainly actions or clumsy speeches, but without the strong insinuation of moral obliquity which we have attached to the Latin *sinister*.

Among a generally right-handed race, it is not difficult to see the reason of this. Any one who has watched a cricket-match in which a left-handed batsman was taking part, knows what trouble he causes to his opponents; how the fielders have to change either their positions or their functions every time he faces the

bowler; and how odd he appears at the wrong, that is, the unusual, side of the wicket. Nay, just look at the reflection in a mirror (which of course makes right appear left and left right) of a right-handed person using pen, needle, or knife, or doing any action habitually performed by the right hand. How peculiar it appears! Can we not sympathise with the popular view, crystallised in language, which takes the left hand as the type of awkwardness, perversity, even of insincerity and bad faith? Let a right-handed person be obliged by an accident to use his left hand for a time for all purposes, and he will be inclined the more to think that the left hand is well called sinister, so slow and helpless will he find it in doing his bidding, so unreliable and deceptive. Yet it is but a superficial view, very unjust, even in the purely physical aspect, to those who are really left-handed.

In all communities left-handed individuals seem to occur, in somewhat varying proportions. Among ourselves, about one in fifty is said to be left-handed. There is no doubt, from frequent experience, that the peculiarity is hereditary; so that we could not be much surprised if a race were met with in which left-handedness was the rule and not the exception. Yet the reversal of so general a law as that of prevalent right-handedness would need to be established by very conclusive evidence; and, though statements have been made as to a preponderance of left-handed individuals in various parts of the world, none of them are supported by such careful and prolonged observation of facts as would be necessary for their unhesitating acceptance.

One of the prevailing ideas about right-handedness is that it is merely a matter of training, and that left-handed individuals have become so either from want of care on the part of nurses and parents, or from imitation of some older person. In many children, the preference for one hand is shown from a very early age, before the child has learned to handle anything but the very simplest toys, and therefore before training can have caused a preference at all. More than this, the experience of left-handed persons is on record in whom the peculiarity has been early noticed and combated, but without the slightest effect. In the case of one child, both whose parents were left-handed, we are told: 'His mother, accordingly, watched his early manifestations of the same tendency, and employed every available means to counteract it. His left hand was bound up or tied behind him; and this was persevered in until it was feared that the left arm had been permanently injured. Yet all proved vain. The boy resumed the use of the left hand as soon as the restraint was removed.'

It must not be supposed that all persons, whether right or left handed, have so strong

an instinctive preference for one hand as this. There are many degrees and shades of right and left handedness in adult life. A large number of persons seem to have had no strong natural bias either way, and accordingly fall in with the prevailing usage in all, or nearly all respects, and these seem to become right-handed by training and imitation. In some of them, a trace remains of their original indifference in the shape of a preference for the left hand in some actions: it is not uncommon to meet with people right-handed in all other respects, who yet use two-handed implements, such as an axe or a cricket-bat, with the left-hand next the 'business end,' after the manner usual with the left-handed. There is no doubt that among those who have a strong instinctive preference for one hand, the right-handed are in a large majority. The proportion they bear to those right-handed by training only is, and will probably remain, quite uncertain.

The lower limbs are much less closely controlled by the will than the upper; in walking and running, which are by far their most frequent and important uses, their movements are to a very large extent instinctive and automatic, and are, moreover, much more symmetrical than the movements of the upper limbs. Nevertheless, one foot is generally used in preference to the other in such movements as digging (hence sometimes called the *spade foot*), in hopping, in making a leap, &c. But there is a much less uniform preference for one side than in the case of the hand; and it by no means follows that a man is either right or left footed because he is right-handed.

Where there is a choice of two directions of growth or movement in plants or animals, without apparent advantage either way, a preference is almost always shown for one over the other, with occasional exceptions which prove that the rule is not a necessary one. Even among the heavenly bodies, the movements of the planets and their moons follow a similar law; all go in the same direction as the earth and its moon except the moons of Uranus, which revolve round their primary the opposite way. Each species of spiral shell and twining plant has its own favourite direction of making its turns, though there are in each occasional exceptions. It seems but another instance of a similar law that man should use one hand rather than the other as the chosen instrument of his will. Why that hand should be the right is a question that has been much discussed, and on which many different theories have been advanced.

It is well known that, though our external configuration is so nearly symmetrical, the arrangement of the internal organs is very different. The heart lies obliquely in the chest, and more to the left side than the right; the liver, by far the heaviest of the internal organs, is on the right side; the two lungs are differently shaped; and, moreover, the blood-vessels supplying the two sides, especially in the upper regions of the body, are differently

disposed. It is natural that these irregularities of arrangement should have been thought, in some way or other, to supply the explanation.

Much ingenuity has been expended in forming theories which connect the use of the right hand with the disposition of the viscera, and the consequent situation of the centre of gravity a little to the right of the centre of the body. But there is a very simple method of putting not merely the theories, but the fact to the proof. Individuals are occasionally met with in whom there is *transposition* of the viscera—that is, in whom the heart inclines to the right side, and the liver lies on the left; in fact, the internal organs are placed as they would be in the reflection of an ordinary person in a mirror. If the unsymmetrical disposition of the internal organs is the cause of right-handedness in most people, all such individuals ought to be left-handed. Occasionally they have been found to be so; but by no means generally: the co-existence of the conditions seems to be merely a coincidence.

Similarly with regard to the arrangement of the blood-vessels supplying the brain and the upper limbs, it is not found that reversal of the usual arrangement is associated with left-handedness, as must be the case were the unsymmetrical arrangement the cause of right-handedness.

There is, however, one extremely curious and interesting instance of want of symmetry in the bodily functions, which is not merely analogous to right-handedness, but closely linked with it. The nervous machinery normally connected with speech is situated on *one side of the brain only*. So intimate is the relation of this subject to right-handedness that we must consider it in some detail.

It is well known that each side of the brain is connected with the movements and sensations mainly on the opposite side of the body; the *right* brain moves the *left* arm and leg, and *vice versa*. Now, cases are not infrequent in which, with or without 'a shock,' or at least some degree of obvious loss of muscular power on the right side of the body, the faculty of recalling and reproducing spoken words is totally or almost totally lost. Such loss of speech is technically called *aphasia*. It was first shown some thirty-five years ago, by a French physician, that this particular symptom is associated with damage to a limited and very definite part of the brain-substance on the *left side*, which has since been known, in honour of its discoverer, as *Broca's convolution*. When the power of speech has thus been lost, it is possible, if the mental faculties are not otherwise damaged, to acquire it again, by just such a course of training and practice as the child passes through in learning to speak at first, even where Broca's convolution has been so damaged as to be quite incapable of performing its functions. In such a case, the portion of the brain on the right side corresponding to Broca's convolution is capable of taking up its work; but only by being educated to do so, just as the damaged portion of the brain had been originally. If after this the power of speech is lost again, by damage to the right

side similar to that which had impaired the left, there is no hope of its being restored a second time.

It is thus clear that there are two organs or portions of the brain capable of controlling speech; and that under ordinary circumstances only one of them is trained to do so, the other lying fallow. All the education is given to one favoured side, and all the work is done by it; but the neglected one, if called by necessity to undertake the work, can be trained to do it, and to do it, apparently, as satisfactorily as the other.

There are other parts of the brain, or *centres*, similarly devoted to other functions connected with language; one related to the interpretation of spoken words, which might be called a word-hearing centre; one to the interpretation of the written symbols which represent words, or reading-centre; and one to the production of these written symbols, or writing centre. The functions of all these centres are very closely connected and interdependent; and cases are not common in which any one of them is affected alone. Even Broca's convolution is but rarely damaged without injury to other parts; the other speech-centres still more rarely. Yet there is sufficient evidence to show that they exist, each in a definite position in the brain, and that all are situated on the same side of the brain in each individual.

Here, then, is a singularly complete analogy to the preferential use of the right hand: there are two sets of organs, either of which may be used for speech, one on each side of the brain, but only those upon one side are trained; only they have the education carried out which makes them effective. Yet if the educated centres are so damaged as to lose their functions, the others can be trained to take their place. So we have two hands, either of which may be trained for the performance of delicate movements; yet in most of us only one of them has been so trained; the other remains comparatively awkward and inactive, unless accident compels it to try to take the place of the educated hand.

A striking analogy; but it is more than an analogy. We have said that the active speech-centre is that on the left side; and this is the case in the great majority of individuals. But occasionally it is found that the right, and not the left side of the brain has been educated as regards speech. When this is the case, it is always found that the individual has been *left-handed*. Whatever then is the cause of right-handedness, it is closely associated with left-brainedness, if we may use the expression, not only for the comparatively coarse movements of the hand, but for the fine adjustments of windpipe, tongue, lips, &c., which produce articulate speech, and the far finer machinery within the brain itself which registers our stores of words.

If then, as we have tried to show, right-handedness is in many cases not merely the result of training; is not caused by the unsymmetrical arrangement of the organs or blood-vessels in the trunk; but is closely associated with the assumption of important functions by that side of the brain connected with the right

hand, it seems reasonable to believe that the preference for the right hand is due to a superiority of the left half of the brain over the right. Several observers state that, on careful weighing of the two halves of the brain, the left is found in a considerable majority of cases a little heavier than the right. This might, of course, be an effect rather than a cause of the greater use of the left brain; and some who have investigated the point have not found such a general excess of weight on the left side. It has also been asserted by some authorities and denied by others that the left brain develops a little earlier than the right in the majority of cases. Meantime, these points must be regarded as not definitely settled. But there seems sufficient reason to seek for the cause of the preference of one hand rather in the part of the brain which regulates its movements than in the hand itself, or any other of the organs of the body.

In persons who grow up left-handed, we have seen that there is good reason to believe that the left-handedness, and therefore the right-brainedness, is antecedent to any training. It is no doubt the same with the left-brainedness of strongly right-handed people. There are many besides these who have no strong natural bias either way; how is it that they become left-brained? That they are so as regards speech in adult life there is no reason to doubt. As has been stated, it is only in those who have been decidedly left-handed that right-brain damage leads to loss of speech. The only reasonable explanation of the facts seems to be that those who have no strong tendency to prevalence of either side become left-brained because they are trained to become right-handed. If this is the case, the preference for the right hand has an unexpected and far-reaching influence upon the training of the brain-centres.

It would be interesting in this connection to know at what precise age the preference for one hand asserts itself. But few accurate observations seem to have been made upon this point. In one case, however, it is recorded that a distinct preference for the right hand became noticeable as early as the seventh month: a long time, as time must be reckoned in an infant's life, before the development of intelligent speech. So far as this goes, it confirms the view expressed above.

Very many of those who are strongly left-handed have found their peculiarity a very decided advantage to them in life. Of course they are at a disadvantage in trying to use implements which are constructed for right-handed use, such, for instance, as scythes and golf-clubs, and require to have special ones made for their own use to allow them to compete on equal terms with the majority. But by learning to write, and to perform other delicate movements with the right hand, they acquire, without impairing the natural aptitude of the left, much more dexterity with the right than the right-handed ever attain to with their left hand, and thus in many cases reach a degree of ambidexterity which renders them, instead of 'gauche,' peculiarly clever and skilful in their manipulations. It is among those

originally left-handed that men would be found like David's companions, who 'could use both the right hand and the left in slinging stones and in shooting arrows from the bow.'

When a child displays a decided preference for the use of the left hand, it is, as we have seen, useless to make forcible efforts to suppress it. By all means let the right hand be trained in writing, in using knife and spoon at table, and in as many actions usually right-handed as can be easily superintended. But the use of the left on other occasions should not be prevented; this will only diminish its training and its aptitude without greatly increasing the dexterity of the right.

There seems to be no good reason why right-handed people should not attain some of the ambidexterity which is usually the privilege only of the left-handed. A little trouble expended in practising with the left hand, as well as the right, throwing, drawing, and other common movements requiring skill, would be rewarded by a much increased usefulness of that generally neglected member. If there is a natural preference for the right hand, it is probable that no amount of practice would make the left equally expert in actions that have once been well acquired by the right. But the experience of the left-handed seems to show that it is well worth while for the right-handed to give more attention to their despised left hands than they usually do.

Nay, more; if we are right in believing that right-handedness in some cases precedes and determines the use of the left brain for the interpretation and reproduction of speech, both spoken and written, may not a greater use of the left hand lead to a better development of the right brain? Certainly, as one writer says in discussing this point, 'there is no proof that a man becomes any wiser by being able to use both hands alike.' But it is quite conceivable that an education of the two hands in different directions might enable the brain to do more work, or to do it more easily.

Let us consider for a moment those speech-relations of the brain which we know to be unilateral. The early use of the right hand has, we believe, led to our storing in our left brains all the memories of our mother-tongue; and the other languages we acquire are registered on the same side. But we have seen that the other side can be educated, even in adult life, when the need arises, to acquire these speech-functions. Would it not be a distinct advantage if the unused side could be made to discharge this office in acquiring a foreign tongue? It seems to the writer that it might be worth while to try whether this could not be done. Let the left hand be used for all actions habitually performed by the right while learning French, say: let the book be held, the pages turned, the words written with the left hand, and let the right be allowed to be as nearly as possible inactive. It is at least possible that such a method, carefully carried out, would lead to the acquisition of the language by the unused right brain-centres; and if this were so, the capacity of the brain for languages would be doubled. We may imagine some future generation keeping their left brains for

the Teutonic languages, and storing the Romance languages on the right side. If one of them has his left speech-centres damaged, he will still retain some languages in which he can communicate his ideas to others.

THE VILLAGE SHOP.

I VERY much fear that the village shop is a doomed institution—doomed to death from inanition. The large grocers of the towns now send their delivery carts along every highway and byway of the country side. Not the remotest village or hamlet is left unsolicited. The country girls will no longer regulate their requirements by the small and unfashionable stock of ribbons and finery which the village shopkeeper can afford to display. With the growth of ideas and information comes necessarily a leaving behind and forsaking of the old things which satisfied the needs of a less exacting generation. We are making great strides year by year; sweeping away prejudice and ignorance, and marching forward—or so we think—towards an era of general happiness and perfection. But for all that, some of us pause now and again and remember with 'a feeling of sadness and longing' many of the old picturesque details of life, country life especially, which belonged to the old order. 'Leisure is gone!' sorrowfully exclaims George Eliot, in *Adam Bede*; and we, forty-years later, have too much cause to echo her sigh. Leisure, the old, easy-going leisure of country life, is indeed gone from most places; and where it still lingers, its life is ebbing fast. It is a very, very little island, this England of ours, and the powerful, far-reaching machinery of the school board has left few corners untampered with.

The country shops that are still flourishing and prosperous are no longer picturesque. They are owned by enterprising men of some capital, who have put in new shop-fronts with plate-glass. They buy their goods direct from London and Liverpool and Glasgow, and sell at co-operative prices; they keep an assistant and take apprentices. In short, they are 'getting on.'

But in the more remote country districts, where the roads are perhaps hilly and not over-good, and where the nearest railway station is some miles away, the village shop, 'old style,' may still be found. It is almost invariably presided over by a woman, who is well able to satisfy the demands of customers upon her time without much neglect of her household duties. Often she is a widow or a spinster; generally her manners and education are a little above those of the labourers' and cottage-farmers' wives. If she is married, her husband is seldom a farm-hand, but follows one of the more independent occupations of the country. He will most likely be the carrier, or the tailor; or he may farm some few acres for himself. He is perhaps a basket-maker, in which case he probably rents a neighbouring 'withy-bed.' Or he may be a carpenter or wheelwright, or the blacksmith.

The old-fashioned country shop does not pretend to include drapery among its stores. Pins and needles it keeps, and a few reels of cotton and threads; but for anything else the villagers must go or send into town. The shopkeeper is licensed, as the legend above the doorway informs us, to sell 'tea, coffee, snuff, and tobacco;' and to these she adds the most staple articles of a grocer's stock-in-trade. Sweets of course she sells, and such miscellaneous commodities as may be easily and profitably retailed by the 'penn'orth.' Bottles of ink and gum, penholders and slate-pencils, tin-tacks and hair-oil; these are her stock.

Most of her supplies, with the exception of the odds and ends of haberdashery, are drawn from the large grocers of the neighbouring towns. These supply her at prices about midway between cost and retail, and she adds as much extra profit as her customers seem inclined to pay; generally her price is about twenty or twenty-five per cent. above town value—not exorbitant, when one considers the cost of the seven or eight miles carriage by road, the credit given, and the infinitesimal quantities in which her stores are disposed of. For it is rarely that the best of her customers give her a monopoly of their patronage. At Christmas-time and Easter, and on Fair days, a visit will be paid to town, and a large parcel brought home from the grocer's—probably the 'Stores,' or a 'Present-shop,' where teapots, glass and china ornaments, and various articles of questionable quality and utility are bestowed on customers.

Now and then the village shop is visited by a 'traveller' from a distance. Not of course from wholesale houses of first-class standing. These would neither condescend to make up the small quantities needed by our shop, nor risk offending their customers among the town grocers by poaching on their preserves.

The men who 'tout' country shops are often sent out by third and fourth-rate houses, who will make up the small and assorted—very much assorted—'parcels' ordered.

It may be safely asserted that the village shopkeeper would do very much better to adhere to the grocer of the neighbouring town than yield to the blandishments of the 'commercial.' Even if 'house' and traveller alike are thoroughly honourable—as is generally the case—she is sure to buy what she is not likely to sell, and a great deal too much of what she *can* sell. The traveller gets a commission on his sales, and he is not likely to shut up his order-book while he sees a chance of doing further business; human nature is human nature, and he has his living to make. More than this, unscrupulous firms, represented by equally unscrupulous travellers, will not hesitate to send more goods—'here a little, there a little'—than were ever ordered. The grocer in the neighbouring town, on the contrary, understands her needs as no one else can. He will neither induce her to lumber her shelves with unsaleable stock, nor will he unduly press her for payment when over-long credit—the result of a hard winter, or much illness in the village—has drained her till to low-water mark. He knows her to be honest and hard-working, and

probably thinks that, at the worst—in the event of her death—the stock and furniture will pretty nearly meet her debts. She has dealt with him and with his father before him for twenty years and more, and, sentiment and kind feeling aside, old customers must be cherished, old trade connections not lightly sundered. So, though the account in the grocer's ledger may show a heavy balance against her, the old lady is received with friendly courtesy on her periodical visits to town. Even if a hint as to payment is felt to be needed, it is given gently, and the pill is gilded with cake and biscuits and a glass of wine in the private office or parlour.

But we have discoursed too long of the village shop and its mistress before exhibiting our view. Passing up the broad village street, with the church and its sunny sloping graveyard on one side, it is some time before we distinguish the shop. All the cottages, or nearly all, stand back from the road, their lower windows half hidden from view by the old and well-grown currant and gooseberry bushes, lilacs, and yews. Some are half-timbered and thatched, others are of warm red brick, with tiled, wide-eaved roofs; not the staring red brick of the town 'villa residence,' but the mellow tint which makes such a perfect harmony with its setting of English fields and trees. It is over the door of one of these latter that we read the notice 'Post-office,' the usual adjunct of the village shop. As we go up the path, we see the window on the right of the door exhibits a varied assortment of attractions, principally show-cards; two or three open boxes of sweets, peppermints and hokey-pokey; some penny bottles of ink, sauce, and hair-oil; a peg-top or two, and some marbles. This display is entirely shut off from any but mounted passers-by, by a large clump of lupins growing a yard from the window. But this is of little importance; every one in the neighbourhood knows the shop and what is likely to be obtainable in it; and the only customers who ever pause before entering to inspect the window are children, who, when presented with a halfpenny as a reward for, or incentive to, especially meritorious behaviour, may be seen standing on tip-toe for a prolonged survey, unable to make up their minds between the known virtues of peppermints and the untried qualities of the 'latest thing' in sweet-stuffs, brought from the town last market-day.

The door is closed, so we knock with our stick and wait. Over the front of the house spreads a carefully trained pear-tree, on which a promising crop is already formed. There is a corresponding bed of lupins under the left-hand window; the topmost petals of each blue spine are now fully out, and a close inspection shows that the lower ones are beginning to fade. Pity that this beautiful plant is being banished to make way for the favourites of modern taste. At intervals on either side of the path to the gate are peonies in full flower standing between gooseberry bushes, the branches of which already bend with their burden of fruit. The greater part of the ground is occupied with potatoes, early

and late; some with the 'haulm' already high and bushy, some only just showing above the soil.

We have time for these observations, for no one has answered our knock. But the afternoon sun is blazing full upon us, so, finding the door only latched, we step inside, into a tiny entry about three feet square. On the left an open door shows us the kitchen or living-room of the house. No one is there, and we stand for a moment and admire the clean, red, quarried floor and open grate, where a kettle is beginning to sing a gentle intimation of tea. The high dresser is of dark oak and garnished with willow-pattern crockery. A high-backed oak settle screens the grate from any draught from window or door, and on the other side of the fire an upright arm-chair with a loose cushion on the seat proclaims the evening position of the mistress. But at present it is occupied by a handsome tabby cat, who sleeps on, unconscious of our presence.

On the right of the entry, a half-door leads into the shop, and opening this, we set in motion a bell, whose jangling is followed after a few minutes by footsteps in the garden, and the mistress of the place appears. We ask for a glass of ginger-beer and a biscuit, both of which a glance round assures us are procurable, and while she is reaching a biscuit tin from a shelf and searching for the bottle opener, we can pursue our observations.

She is a tall elderly woman of scrupulously 'wholesome' appearance. Her gray hair is drawn smoothly back from a forehead whose breadth and comparative freedom from wrinkles, together with the placid expression of her gray eyes, gives an air of repose to her face, and takes much of the harshness from her somewhat thin lips and strong square jaw. Her neat black dress fits her rather angular frame not ungracefully, and is only relieved by a small gray shawl or 'cross-over,' which covers her shoulders, and is drawn across her breast. Her voice is even and quiet, and not without refinement of tone. Our remarks about the weather are courteously replied to, and our admiration of her garden flowers and crops give evident pleasure.

The biscuits are crisp and not 'cupboardy,' and the ginger-beer, taken from a case on the floor, is cool and refreshing. The quarried floor gives to the shop the cool damp atmosphere of a dairy, delightful for the chance caller on a hot summer day, but not wholly unconnected with rheumatism and chills in autumn and winter. As the mistress moves about, putting things in order and glancing now and then into the garden and street, we notice the absence of all dust or dirt, and the methodical arrangements of the small stock. Canisters are bright, though the gilt and lettering on them is worn and faded. The pair of scales is set square on one end of the counter, the pans shining, the weights in a neat pile, one tiny quarter-ounce keeping the scales from balancing. At the other end is a section of an American cheese, looking creamy and appetising. The half-empty flour bag stands near us, the mouth rolled neatly down all round to facilitate the insertion of the scoop. All tells of method and

order in the shop, as the pleasant kitchen tells of a neat housewife.

The click of the garden gate heralds an approaching customer, and we look on while a fresh-faced child is served with tea, sugar, soap, and a 'ha'porth' of salt, which latter article is sawn off a block fetched from the kitchen, where it is stored for greater dryness. As the little girl places her purchases in a basket, and saying, 'Mother'll pay Saturday, Mrs Pearce,' is about to depart, Mrs Pearce quietly takes two or three sweets from a box in the window and puts them into her hand. The child is almost too much occupied with furtive glances at us to do more than smile her thanks; for this is a lonely village, and a stranger in it is matter for much conjecture and gossip at doorways and over dividing garden-fences.

We finish our ginger-beer, wish Mrs Pearce good-afternoon, and take our departure, wondering much, as we pursue our devious ramble, if such an establishment as the one we have just left can possibly 'pay its way.' Well, probably it would not satisfy the needs of an enterprising assistant, anxious to launch himself into business, and take unto himself a wife. He would require more scope for his 'pushing' enterprise. But it is sufficient for the wants of this lonely, middle-aged woman. Its demands on her time are not exacting; she has ample time to keep her house in order, cultivate her garden—with the occasional help of a friendly neighbour in 'digging over.' Her habits are frugal and her expenses small. Her few hens and her garden yield a large proportion of her food. There is probably a pig in a 'cot' somewhere in the tiny croft or orchard in the rear. The profits of the concern will at all events pay her rent and something over, even in these days of keen competition and delivery carts. If she has been long established there, she has a nice little sum laid by from the older palmy days of village trading, and consoles herself with the conviction that the present trade, small as it is, will 'last her time.' Her wish is more than echoed by many. We know that 'the old order changeth, giving place to new,' but the new is as yet unmellowed by the softening touch of time; and the thought of the cool stone-floor and sunny quiet of Mrs Pearce's shop finally vanishing before the grocer's pair-horse van, is not acceptable.

A TURPENTINE FARM IN GEORGIA.

ALTHOUGH we have heard much about the Far West, perhaps the wildest life in the States may be seen in the vast pine forests of Georgia. Here and there, dotted in amongst the great expanse of trees, are the turpentine farms and the sawmills. At the latter, where the machinery turns to the tune of the fast-flowing river, life is comparatively civilised; but amongst the turpentine farms, life is of the wildest. There is certainly no solitary shepherding or cattle-driving to do, but the loneliness in the wilderness of trees is perhaps even greater than on the rolling prairies. Trees, trees everywhere, on upland and low-

land, whichever way we look. The melancholy sough of the wind through the branches, and the rich terebene smell of the pines, follow us everywhere, whilst at the foot of the trees the red ants build their cities of dead pine spicules. Only yellow pine on the uplands and rosemary pine beneath, until the monotony makes us feel that the whole universe must consist of nothing but pine-trees.

When a prospector makes up his mind to start a turpentine farm, according to the *Naval Stores Review*, he first of all selects a patch of forest that has not been worked, and either buys the land or leases it from the state. Then he has a clearing made, and proceeds to erect his still and to get quarters ready for his workmen. The housing accommodation consists of a number of two-roomed cottages built of rough timber and roofed with boards or shingles. The prospector's great endeavour is to place his headquarters so that they are near the railway or the river on the one hand, and conveniently situated for bringing the raw material to the still, on the other. When all is ready, the adventurer's real trouble begins with the selection of his woodmen or overseers. After these are selected they are sent out all over the state to engage workmen. Labour is scarce in Georgia, and it usually happens that the overseers have to scour two or three of the neighbouring states before they can secure a sufficient number of competent labourers. As may be imagined, much responsibility rests upon the shoulders of the overseers, for upon their good judgment in securing industrious steady men the whole success of the venture depends. When the labourers have been engaged, the dangerous task of burning the grass and rubbish commences. As a preliminary, the grass and everything combustible is cleared away carefully from the roots of every tree, and a large patch is cleared round the edges of the prospector's section, so as to prevent the fire from spreading to the rest of the forest. As soon as sufficient clearance has been made, the grass is fired and allowed to burn itself out. In spite of all precautions, the forest catches fire sometimes; a large proportion of the trees are destroyed, as well as the settlement itself, perhaps; and the prospector has to seek pastures new as a broken man. The fire, if it does not get out of hand, clears the ground of rubbish, so that cartage is easier, and the forest is rendered tolerably safe from accidental fires in the future—a vital consideration. The next thing to do is to run 'drifts,' as they are called, through the forest. This operation consists in removing strips of bark from the trees in long parallel lines running right through the section of forest, and the trees are now ready for boxing. This is the most important proceeding of all. The hands, mostly negroes, are divided into squads, and over each is set a white superintendent and a

tallyman, also white as a rule. Each man is provided with a boxing axe, and all work regularly along the drift. The 'box' is an incision in the tree about twelve inches wide, by seven inches deep and three inches high. If the men are not watched carefully, they will cut the boxes too wide or too deep, and if this is done, the trees are destroyed very rapidly. The box is levelled to prevent the 'gum,' which begins to run as soon as the box is cut, from overflowing. The contents are removed every day by dippers, and conveyed in buckets to barrels, which are taken on wagons to the still when full. As soon as the wound in the tree heals, it has to be opened again by cutting away the bark above the box and making a fresh streak. The whole process is very destructive to the trees, which are killed in a few years by the boxing process. Before many years are passed, the pine forests will be ruined if the present system is allowed to go on. Fortunately, an earthenware pan has been invented, which fits close against the tree, and takes the place of the box as a receptacle for the gum; this should diminish the evil to some extent. Already, a law has been passed by the state to limit the cutting of boxes to the winter months, and so minimise the evil.

The crude gum consists principally of a mixture of resin and turpentine, which are separated by distillation. It is a simple process, although requiring care and experience. The gum is boiled in a large iron 'kettle' or still, water being added from time to time; the spirits of turpentine pass over with the steam, and are condensed in a worm surrounded with cold water, the turpentine being skimmed off the top of the condensed water with a ladle. The resin is left behind in the still, and is run out into barrels at intervals. The lightest coloured resin is obtained from the virgin boxes, and fetches the highest price; the lowest quality is that scraped from the boxes when they are allowed to run dry in October. The process of hacking and chipping the tree continues up to this period, the boxes being extended until they are twelve or even fifteen feet high. Each labourer is given a definite number of trees to chip, and generally manages to do the whole of his work by the end of Wednesday, spending the rest of the week in idleness. The white woodman or inspector looks after six or eight of these sections, going his rounds on horseback.

Although large sums of money are made at turpentine farming, the adventurer is in a constant state of anxiety. There is always the terrible danger of fire breaking out at any moment. With all the resin and turpentine about, the whole place becomes a sea of flames in a moment, should a fire once start. Besides this risk, there is continual trouble with the hands, who desert on the slightest pretext, and the farmer is ruined more frequently by the desertion of his labourers than by fire. In the case of the white overseers, the work of riding round in the forest day after day, bossing black labourers, without any refining influences, is dreary and demoralising. In the Far West things are not nearly so bad, for on the

prairies a man may be lonely, and the cowboy society may be of a very low order; but there is not the eternal weariness of the pine forest, and there is no nigger-driving.

HUNTING WILD HORSES IN NEW ZEALAND.

By E. M. KIRWAN.

IN the centre of the north island of New Zealand there are large areas of poor volcanic country of no value to the agriculturist, and of small use to the squatter. Here are to be found herds of wild horses, the progeny of animals which have escaped from stations and homesteads. A favourite amusement of the local selectors, who are occasionally joined by visitors, is to arrange hunts, when the sport afforded is generally of the most exciting description. The essentials for success are utter fearlessness in the saddle, a quick eye, and the possession of considerable bodily strength, combined with a medium weight. Given these, and the rest—a general knowledge of the country and handiness with the lasso—may be readily acquired. As regards the latter, one has only to try the experiment to explode the hoary tradition that years of apprenticeship are required to make a man expert in the use of the green hide lasso. I know a young farmer, who is now on a visit to England, who became tolerably proficient after two days' practice, and his is by no means a solitary instance. The rope employed is generally between thirty and forty feet long, and the throw is given from a distance of some twenty feet. Mexican saddles are but rarely used, the New Zealanders preferring to depend upon the strength of the arm to pull up the flying animal with a jerk round the neck, which chokes it almost into insensibility, and brings it with a thud to the earth. The first time of going out to hunt wild horses must ever remain a red-letter day in the novice's life. A party may consist of two or three or four, but it seldom exceeds the latter number. There are sometimes a couple of ladies; and although their want of muscular strength and their unwillingness to practise make them poor hands with the lasso, still their light weight and magnificent horsemanship not unfrequently render their aid of no small value. It goes almost without saying that all must be well mounted, and the fact that the work is so rough on horses and 'uses' them up so soon, is the chief reason of the pastime not being more followed than it is.

On nearing where the wild horses are known to be, some eminence is ascended from where a good view of the surrounding scrubby and sparsely timbered country may be obtained. As a rule, the herds number from ten to twelve, made up of mares and one stallion. No stallion will allow another stallion into his herd, and stubborn fights frequently occur between horses owing to this. The beaten males, after being expelled, join herds exclusively of stallions. On any herd being sighted by the hunters, a good idea can generally be formed by the experienced man as to which route the animals will take in their way to the

rugged hills, for which they invariably make when disturbed. A scheme is mapped out to cut them off if possible, and the party scatters, each to take up his allotted position. Of course while doing this, every advantage is taken of the natural inequalities of the ground so as to escape observation. When the alarm is given, however, all need for caution is at an end, and each hunter puts his steed to full gallop. The stallion, the head of the herd, boldly comes out to meet him, and endeavours to distract attention from the rest. In some rare instances he is lassoed and captured at once, but he generally manages to rejoin his wives, which by this time have trooped into single file with his favourite mare in the lead. Should the herd be turned and get into difficulties, the stallion takes up his position in the van, and the great object is to cut him off from the rest. Should this be accomplished, both he and the mares become confused, and the lassos often manage to take two or three per man. Instances have been known where horses have been thrown to the ground by the hunter giving a violent jerk to the animal's tail when it was making an abrupt turn. When his quarry is brought down, either by this method or the use of the lasso, the rider jumps from his steed, whips a 'blinder' (a handkerchief is used when there is nothing else procurable) over the prostrate horse's eyes, and straps up one of its fore-legs securely. If this is properly done, the animal may safely be left 'until called for,' for no horse thus secured can stray far. Should a man be so unlucky as to capture a branded horse, or a foal running with a branded mare, he cannot keep it; but all others become the property of the hunter, and after they undergo a rough-and-ready process of breaking-in, are sold at prices ranging from twenty-five shillings to fifteen pounds each. The latter figure is, however, seldom reached, unless in the case of exceptionally fine stallions. Great numbers of these wild horses die from starvation in the winter time, but still the herds show no signs of diminution.

CONFESSION.

For all these things I ask your pardon, dear—

That I, being fond and true,
Have sometimes in my fondness doubted you,
With brief distrust, with sudden biting fear;
For all these things I ask your pardon, dear.

Because I love you more than tongue can say,

I feared lest I might be
Bankrupt of love that flowed so full and free;
I feared to lose you, dear, some dismal day—
Because I love you more than tongue can say.

But now I stake my life upon your troth,

And trust you as my soul.
Of all a heart's fond faith I give the whole
To your most tender keeping—nothing loth,
Since love and life are one, to give you both.

ARTHUR L. SALMON.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 628.—VOL. XIII. SATURDAY, JANUARY 11, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

A PLEA FOR A SIMPLER LIFE.

'THROW physic to the dogs, I'll none of it,' exclaimed Macbeth in the teeth of the doctor called in to cure Lady Macbeth's unspeakable mental troubles. A well-known physician used to tell his patients that if they had not learned at forty what was best for their stomachs, he could not help them. This is quite of a piece with the sayings that a man is either a fool or a physician at forty, and that many people dig their own graves all too soon with their teeth. That philosopher upon things in general, Professor Blackie, uttered his plea late in life for simplicity all round. He considered there was too much of everything nowadays—far too much eating and drinking, preaching, writing, and speaking. 'My friend, you eat too much; my friend, you drink too much,' was a saying often on the lips of the late Sir Andrew Clark, who thought that the worst disease was the outcome of this constant and uninterrupted violation of health. Here is an old Edinburgh physician in wonderful agreement with all this, who has spent part of the evening of a busy life in telling the world that it eats and drinks far too much, that but little or no medicine is sometimes best, and that the true vocation of the physician is to help nature to help herself. The few simple rules which guided his own personal conduct, and his practice as a physician, were chiefly that in sickness neither medicine, nor alcoholic stimulant, nor food is necessary, as a general rule, but are often injurious. That the sick are best left to nature's remedies; rest to the stomach, rest and warmth to the whole system, by being sent to bed, with pure air and good water. To all who are curious as to this method of treatment we refer them to the *Plea for a Simpler Life*, by George Keith, M.D., F.R.C.P.E. (A. and C. Black). In this little book he has set down in detail what he considers many of the errors of both patients and doctors as to diet and general treatment. What he preaches he has practised on himself and

some of his patients, with the happiest results, although in the process he earned the nickname of the 'Starvation Doctor' from those who disagreed with him. But to all critics he quotes the motto of the Keiths, Earls Marischal of Scotland: 'They have said: what say they? let them say.'

The author is the son of the late Dr Keith of St Cyrus, Kincardineshire, author of a once popular work on prophecy and of other religious books. Of his seven sons, four were doctors, the only one surviving being the author of the *Plea*. His more famous brother, Dr Thomas Keith, with whom he was twenty years in partnership, had a European reputation as a successful operator in cases of ovariotomy. He settled in London in 1888, and died only last October. Full of talent, courage, and genius, he ranks as one of the greatest amongst those who have formed the Edinburgh Medical School. His brother, whose work we are now briefly to discuss, may be said to ride a hobby; but the world leans so much towards self-indulgence, there will be little difficulty in keeping the balance level in the case of the many or the few who adopt his advice and treatment.

There is a wonderful agreement between the sentiments of Dr Keith as to doctors and medicine and those of Samuel Smiles in his first book, *Physical Education*, which was favourably noticed in this *Journal* on its appearance in 1838. An article on 'Use and Abuse of Medicine,' by a physician, which appeared in this *Journal* also, on May 5, 1849, might have been written either by Dr Smiles, or the author of the volume under consideration. The future author of *Self-help* had just passed as a surgeon, was practising in his native Haddington, and his book is a wonderfully acute and sensible production for a youth just turned his twenty-second year. He girds at the absurdity of the regulations which made it the interest of the greater part of the medical men in England to fill their patients with drugs, whether they actually required them or not, in order to obtain

anything like a fair remuneration for their advice and attendance. It would prove more useful and profitable to the public, he tells us, 'that the most effectual way to insure health is to adopt the natural means to preserve it—such as by pure air, exercise, and healthy supply of food—instead of wantonly neglecting these means, and afterwards resorting to physic, that instead of alleviating, often infixes the mischief more deeply in the constitution.' He believes that such a discovery would render physicians, who were then comparatively useless in *curing* disease, of great importance to the public weal, as *Preservators* of the health of the community. This is pretty strong for a young medical man, and although the world has changed somewhat since this was written, yet the hawker in Manchester who the other day, feeling unwell, swallowed twenty pills on Saturday and eight on Sunday, and who was dead on Monday, certainly needed this advice. It was clear that Dr Smiles was much more in his element as railway secretary, or writing the lives of self-made men. He was but a voice crying in the wilderness, the echo of which has been more than taken up by Dr Keith.

We are all deeply interested in our own health, but it takes effort and self-denial to follow good advice. 'What is the use of good advice,' said Thackeray once, when asked if he had ever received the best medical advice, 'if you don't follow it. They tell me not to drink, and I *do* drink. They tell me not to smoke, and I *do* smoke. They tell me not to *eat*, and I *do* eat. In short, I do everything that I am desired *not* to do; and therefore, what am I to expect.' Whether he expected it or not, the great novelist had a sudden and comparatively early death. Thomas Carlyle had his stomach ruined, at least so he thought, in all his student lodgings; and when told to stop smoking, he said his medical adviser might as well have whispered this advice into the ear of the nearest jackass. Listen to Dr Keith, who has outlived all his contemporaries who chose a short life, and he is afraid not entirely a merry one. 'If when in good health we took only the food necessary for our comfort and for our work, and no more, instead of working the stomach to the utmost, and helping it when it flags by dainties, as well as by drugs and stimulants, we would have much more pleasure from our meals, and a much longer continuance of strength and health. We would also escape many of the ills that life is said to be heir to; or, should some disease perchance come upon us, if we could eliminate from the old system of cure a large amount of the depletion, and from the new a still larger amount of the feeding and physicking, we would come nearer to nature's mode of preventing and curing diseases; we would find that *prevention* would be far the larger element of the two, and that the need for the other would be well-nigh extinguished.' This comes very near Dr Smiles's *Preservator of Health*. Dr Keith might have added something upon the importance of good cookery, which is by no means so well understood, at least in the homes of the poor, as it ought to be. Good cookery, as we all know, is also a powerful *Preservator of Health*.

In reviewing the experience of a lifetime, Dr Keith recalls the time when bleeding, vomiting, purging, and sweating were the order of the day, which was followed by the reaction towards the 'setting up of the system,' the use of stimulating and tonic medicines, and plenty of good food and drink. His practice has been directed against what he considers the fallacies of this style of treatment. He tells us that his own father, an athletic man of over six feet in height, was mismanaged by the doctors—certainly his brother, Dr Thomas Keith, was so, when a student; and he himself suffered so horribly from doses of calomel given to him when a weakly child, that he vowed, if he should ever become a doctor, he would never give a child a dose of it. And he never did. Dr Keith, in a glimpse of personal experience, relates how he dropped taking aperients at thirty-five. Up to this time he confesses to grave errors in diet, and sufferings from occasional bilious attacks which lasted for two or three days, as well as frequent chills. When he had almost decided to leave the trying climate of Edinburgh for a warmer one, an old friend, a Hungarian physician settled in Manchester, asked him, before so deciding, to try what effect giving up butcher-meat would have upon him; to reduce his tea and coffee by one-half, and to take only a little light claret to dinner, if he found that suited him. This doctor considered red-meat diet too irritating for his friend's excitable nerves. He took this advice, and was able to continue work for fifteen years longer; and when he did retire, it was not his stomach which failed him. In his fifteen years of retirement he confesses to excellent health.

It is not our place to discuss here Dr Keith's statement that the present system of medical teaching and practice is wrong, and that it is still on the down-grade. He indicates what most people will admit, that medicine is by no means a fixed science, and that the means nowadays used to cure a large part of the diseases commonly met with, are often those which, when improperly used, are the main causes of these same diseases. It is the improper use of food, drugs, and stimulants he here condemns. It must not be understood that he condemns all drugs; he knows their value and when to use them, but he disputes the aphorism of Hippocrates, 'Better a doubtful remedy than none.' For full-fed people, he considers the best tonic is a little wholesome abstinence, and he mentions with approbation what he heard Professor Syme say, that after fish and soup he had dined. For long he has looked upon alcoholic stimulants as like a whip or spur to a horse; their effect is transient, and attended with a decided loss of power. Hot water, on the other hand, he considers one of the most genuine stimulants we have. In cases of disease, when the organs are not in a healthy condition, there is also a great loss of power in digesting food, and it is done in an imperfect manner. Food taken at this time is more hurtful than beneficial. Obey the dictates of nature rather, and abstain when nature has stopped the appetite. In the human body nature has provided a store of food already

digested, which requires absorption, and which may often be relied upon to tide the patient over until appetite returns. Dyspepsia and other troubles, he points out, have been a perfect mine of wealth to the doctor and the chemist. Dr Tenneson of Paris, an authority on skin diseases, is in accord with him as to food: 'Many people, because they have a good appetite, think they have a good stomach, and manufacture daily in their overloaded digestive tracts toxic substances, which, after they are absorbed, excite abnormal effects, both on the skin and all the other organs of the body.' The recommendation is to restrict the quantity, particularly at the mid-day meal. He also recommends less food, or none at all, when one is worried. Dr Keith once asked Sir Erskine May how he kept his health during anxious work and long parliamentary hours. He replied that his practice was, while Parliament was sitting, to take a chop in the middle of the day and only a cup of tea at night. We fancy he is wrong, however, in crediting Thomas Alva Edison with consideration for his workmen's stomachs, when he shut them in until a certain piece of work was completed.

Those who are curious as to Dr Keith's treatment of influenza cases, cancer, dyspepsia, apoplexy, &c., may be safely referred to this volume, which, being the ripe experience of a lifetime, is calculated to make the reader pause and consider, and certainly can do no human being any harm, but may be the means of doing a very great deal of good.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

PROLOGUE (*continued*).

'NEPHEWS,' he said, laying the bag on the table and keeping both hands upon it, 'you come every night to the Red Lion in hopes of finding out something about my property. It is your inheritance—why shouldn't you come? Sometimes you think it is much—then your spirits rise. Sometimes you think it is little—then your spirits sink. When I begin to talk you prick up your ears. But you never hear anything. Then you go home and you wonder how long the old man will last—eh? and how much money he has got—eh? and what he will do with it—eh? Well, now, you shall have your curiosity satisfied.'

'Sir,' said one of the nephews, 'our spirits may well sink at the thought of your falling into poverty.'

'And,' said the other, 'they may be expected to rise at the thought of your prosperity.'

'I have told you many stories of travel and of profit. Sometimes you believe—in which case you show signs of satisfaction. Sometimes you look glum when you think that you are wasting your evenings.'

'Oh, sir,' said one of the nephews. 'Sure, one cannot waste one's time in such good and improving company as yourself.'

'We come,' said the other, 'for instruction. Your talk is more instructive than any book of travel.'

'The time has now arrived'—the old man paid no attention to these fond assurances—'to tell you what I have, and to show you what you will have. I am now grown old, so old that I must expect before many years are over'—he was already, as you have seen, ninety-four—to die,' he sighed heavily; 'and to give my substance to those who come after. Look you! I bear no manner of affection to you; when a man gets to ninety he cares no longer about anything but himself. That is the beauty and excellence of being old. Then a man has everything for himself—no sharing, no giving. I shall give you nothing—not even if you are bankrupt. But I mean not to defraud my heirs. You shall see, therefore, all I have got. Many a rich merchant living in his great house would be glad to change places with you when I am gone. Many a merchant? All the merchants of London town.'

He took up the bag—it was a long narrow bag of brown canvas, about two feet long, and shaped like a purse of the period.

I know not what they expected, but at the sight of the treasure which he poured out upon the table, these two respectable boat-builders gasped: they looked on with amazement unspeakable, with open mouths, with staring eyes, with flaming cheeks, with quivering hands and trembling knees. They could not look at each other; they dared not speak. It was like the opening of the gates of Paradise, with a full view of the interior arrangements.

They had never dreamed of such a sight. Five hundred pounds all in gold would have seemed to these worthy tradesmen a treasure; five thousand pounds great wealth; ten thousand pounds an inexhaustible sum. For this old man poured out upon the table a pile, not of guineas, but of precious stones. Why then, his stories about the treasures of the Great Mogul must be true. There were diamonds, emeralds, rubies, pearls, all the stones which he described, hundreds of them, thousands of them; there were precious stones, large, splendid, worth immense sums, with smaller ones, with strings of pearls, enough to fill quart pots. And now they understood what was meant by all those stones over which they had grown as incredulous as Didymus.

The old man bent over his heap and ran his fingers into it, and caught a handful and dropped it back again. 'See my beauties!' he cried. 'Look at the colours; the sunshine in them, and the green and the red. Saw you ever the like? Oh! if a man could but live long enough to work through this heap! Why, 'tis seventy years since I first came home, with this bag in my hand for all my fortune, and there's no difference in it yet. It grows no less: I sometimes think it grows bigger. No man, live as long as he could wish, would work through this heap.'

'May we humbly ask, sir,' said one of them,

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taking heart, 'how much money is represented by this bag of jewels?'

'I know not. Take this stone; it's a ruby. Look at it, weigh it; I sold one like it three months ago for fifty pounds. There are hundreds bigger. Well'—he began to put the stones back into the bag—'I have shown it to you because the time will come—not yet, I hope—it must come, I suppose'—he spoke as if there was still a chance of an exception being made in his favour—'when I must give the bag to you two and go away. I shall have to go aboard a strange ship and join a strange company, as bo's'n, maybe, or able seaman, or cook, who knows? and sail away in strange waters on a new cruise, where there are no charts.'

'Not for many years,' murmured one of the nephews.

'Not if our prayers, our daily prayers, can keep you here!' added the other.

'Thank ye,' said John Burnikel, tying up his bag.

'I trust, sir,' said one of the nephews, 'that you keep this precious treasure in a safe place. A whisper, a suspicion, would fly through Wapping like wild-fire, and you would be robbed and murdered.'

'Devil a whisper will there be,' said John. 'You won't start a whisper, that's certain. And I won't. And as for the place where I keep it, no one will see me put it there, and no one would think of looking there. And now, nephews, good-night. Say nothing—but, of course, you will not—and be as patient as you can. I believe you will have to wait a dozen years or so before you get the bag.'

They stepped out into the street and heard him, to their satisfaction, bolting and barring the door behind them.

'Cousin,' said one, 'this has been a wonderful evening. Who could have believed it? We are now rich men—oh!—rich beyond our dreams! We can leave Wapping, and court the society of the Great.'

'Unless his bag is stolen; which may happen. I tremble only to think of keeping such a treasure in such a mean little cottage among all these rogues and villains! It ought to be in a strong room such as merchants use.'

'I think—I fear—we shall not have to wait long. Methinks the old man's voice is breaking. He seemed feebler to-night than I remember to have seen him. Ninety-four is a great, a very great age.'

'Ah! He may not have many weeks—many days—to live. It is a happiness, cousin, to reflect that an uncle who entertains a disposition of so much justice towards his nephews must soon be resting in Abraham's bosom.'

This anxiety proved prophetic. Exactly a week afterwards John Burnikel did not appear at the tavern at six o'clock, nor at half-past six. The nephews hurried round to Broad Street. The door was open; there was no one in the front room: in the room behind they found their uncle lying on his bed, his face drawn as with pain, and with the gray look which often falls upon those who are about to die.

'Ah,' he said, 'I thought you wouldn't be long. Come in, boys. Shut the door and come in.

I've had a kind of fit; my legs don't seem right. Get me a drink: the barrel of beer is in the other room. I shall be better to-morrow—much better.' He drank a copious draught of beer which refreshed him. He tried to sit up, but could not. It was a day in August when it gets dusk about eight. At nightfall they found the tinder-box and got a light, and sat down one on each side of the bed.

So they sat all night till three in the morning without saying a word to each other. The old man seemed sleeping. At daybreak he began to murmur, rambling in his speech.

'The man's mad. He won't know; he won't find out. He will die mad. No one will know—no one will know. Boys'—he opened his eyes—'you both know where the bag is hidden away. I think this is the end. Well, I've left you rich—half as rich, each of you, as myself.' He closed his eyes. Presently one of the watchers bent over him.

'Cousin,' he said, 'the breath has gone out of the body. Our uncle is no more. Nothing remains but to weep for our uncle.'

'Let us find the bag and divide the property,' said the other, 'before we call in the neighbours.'

'It is our sorrowful duty to do so, as his heirs, and quickly, before the thing gets wind.'

It was the custom to construct at the head of the great wooden bed of the period a secret box, drawer, or repository. Everybody knew the secret place at the head of the bed. It was an open secret, yet it was commonly used in every house for the concealment, as in a place of perfect safety, of the silver and the valuables.

They searched in this receptacle. The bag was not there.

'It is in this room, because he brought it out of this room. Let us look again.'

Again they searched every corner and cranny of the secret hiding-place. It was not there. There might be some other hiding-place in the bed. It could only be at the head. They tapped and hammered. In vain. Was it on the head of the bed? They climbed up and looked. No. It was not there. Could it be in the mattress? In the feather-bed? In the bolster? Under the bolster? Under the mattress? They lifted the dead man on to the floor, and they examined these places and other constituent portions of the bed. In vain. They lifted their great-uncle back again to the bed, and gazed at each other with anxious eyes.

'It must be in this room,' they reflected. 'He brought it from this room. He took it back.'

They looked round. There was a three-legged stool leaning against the wall because one of its legs was broken off. There was a sea-chest in the corner, a big heavy box with a lock, and bound strongly with iron. Ah! The sea-chest. They dragged it out, and threw open the lid. Within was a curious collection of miscellaneous property: a big silver watch, a knife, a dirk, an ugly Malay creese, an old pistol, a bo's'n's whistle, a mariner's compass, a bundle of charts, a few trifles in carved wood from India, two or three broken figures from India, a dead flying-fish, together with a bundle

of decayed or decaying clothes which filled up the bottom of the chest. They pulled everything out with eager haste, each man looking jealously at the other for fear he should secretly convey the bag into his own pockets. Everything lay on the floor, and the bag was not in the chest. It was divided into two compartments, a larger and a smaller. They held it up to the light. No, there was nothing in the chest. They looked again about the room. There was a cupboard in the wall. Both discovered it at the same moment and rushed at it. They threw open the door. It was a spacious cupboard. But there was nothing in it at all. Old John Burnikel had never used that cupboard.

'Let us lift the hearthstone,' said one of them. 'Everybody knows that the hearthstone was often the family bank where money was stowed away for safety when there was no secret hiding-place at the head of the bed. And the family continued to put faith in the hearthstone long after it was perfectly well known to those persons who break in and steal.'

They did lift the hearthstone. Nothing was under it. The earth had never been disturbed since the stone was laid.

Their faces were now haggard. Could the bag be stolen?

They then prised up the boards of the floor: they tore down the wainscoting: they searched the little backyard for signs of recent disturbance: they remembered that there were two rooms up-stairs; they were empty and unfurnished, but they tore up the boards: they searched in the roof: they searched the chimneys. Heavens! There was no sign of the bag anywhere. Where was it? Where was it? All that day they searched. The next day—which was indecent in haste—they buried the old man, neither of them attending the funeral for fear of the bag being found in their absence. And then they began again. They wrecked the house: they reduced it to its bare walls of brick: they pulled the bed to pieces: they left, as they thought, nothing unturned. But the bag was not in the house.

Then they began to think that while the old man lay unconscious, the door open, the bag might have been stolen. But it must have been hidden away, and nobody knew that it was there or had thought of it—

Then another suspicion entered the heads of both at the same moment. One of them, when it had taken shape with the firm outline of certainty, put it into words.

'His last words, George—his dying words—were: "You know where I've put the bag," and he looked at you—at you. What did he look at you for? Because you know where he put the bag.'

'He looked at you, Robert—not at me. Why? Because he had told you where it was. You wormed his secret out of him.'

'And now you try to turn it off on me. You've taken the bag: you've got it somewhere; you think to take it all for yourself.'

'This impudence passes everything. Do you think I am simple not to see through this vil-

lainy? 'Tis you—you—you—who have taken the bag.'

It is sad to relate that these recriminations became more and more bitter; that the two boat-builders of Wapping, churchwardens, jurymen, most respectable and responsible persons, partners and cousins, did in the agony of their disappointment call each other rogue, thief, villain; that they proceeded, being beyond and beside of themselves with bitterness, to shake their fists at each other; that they next—it was a fighting age—fell upon and mauled each other; that they only desisted when exhaustion, not satisfaction, compelled them to separate; and that they parted with threats, curses, and promises of Newgate Gaol and the Condemned Cell.

In a word, the bag could not be found; the agonies endured by those two disappointed men were terrible. To have these treasures just shown to them, dangled before them, and then withdrawn! Heard one ever the like? To conclude, they dissolved partnership. One of them left Wapping altogether, to enjoy, at a distance, the other said, his ill-gotten wealth; the other remained, to conceal, the first said, the fact of his stolen property. And as for the remaining goods of John Burnikel—the table, the bed, and the household gear—they were conveyed to the remaining boat-builder's house, and after one more final search the old man's cottage in Broad Street was abandoned.

But the cousins were wrong. Neither of them had the bag, and it remained undiscovered. You shall see how, in the course of this history, it came to be discovered.

BATH BRICK.

THERE are few households in England where that homely commodity, Bath brick, is not a necessary inmate. But there are, we imagine, quite as few housekeepers who, even if familiar with its outward appearance in the storeroom, and more than vaguely aware of its indispensability, have ever bestowed a thought on either its origin or its manufacture.

The Bath brick is not, it must be confessed, *per se*, an interesting object, and, on examination, it is not easy to see how it could be made more prepossessing to the eye. This oblong, calcareous substance, of pallid hue and rasping touch, certainly bears no romantic aspect, and even if, penetrating as it does into all quarters of the globe, its handling may recall associations with its uses in a mother-country, it would be a fanciful imagination indeed that would connect it with waving trees, running water, or smiling landscape; would credit it with exile from a home of beauty; or assert that, like the poet, the Bath brick is born, not made.

Yet this, allowing for manipulating and shaping and for a final baptism of fire, is very literally the truth. So few of our readers are likely to have felt the most elementary interest in Bath bricks at all, that they are not very likely to have heard, or to remember when heard, that there is only one site in England, and—so far as the exact component parts are

concerned—only one in the world, which can be the centre of its industry. Because in only one river, and within only a certain distance from the town through which that river flows, can be 'gathered,' as it is technically called, the material of which the genuine Bath brick is formed.

That river is the Parrett, and the town Bridgwater, and those who, like the present writer, are familiar with the locality of the industry, and the simple, out-of-door methods of conducting it, would be obliged to admit that it is not without its romantic environment. The river Parrett, it is true, flows somewhat sluggishly through its narrow banks, and is, to all seeming, as turbid and mud-invaded as the 'inward eye' of the historian can picture it when its sullen waters bore the wicker canoes of the British settlers whose clusters of wattle and daub dwellings afforded them shelter on its marshy shores. Even though set in a surrounding of flat country where water meadows are intersected with dykes and bordered by pollard willows in true Dutch fashion, the town itself barely marks the horizon, and would seem to be originally planned only to be overlooked.

But Bridgwater is a busy centre of many industries, has a largely attended weekly market, and is the shopping town for many miles of a rich agricultural district. Moreover, in spite of its air of concerning itself only with the present, it can lay claim to historic interest in the past, and still cherishes traditions of its sieges, from the days of Alfred to those of Cromwell, and of its one memorable battle, when Monmouth was defeated on the plains of Sedgemoor. It is the birthplace of Admiral Blake, and but a few miles distant from the Quantock Hills beloved of Wordsworth and Coleridge during their sojourn at Alfoxton and Nether Stowey. But if we would see where the Bath brick has, literally, its home and haunt, we must resist all other claims on our attention and turn our steps to the river-side.

You need only follow the towing-path which leads on either side of the river, for a few hundred yards, and you cannot fail to be struck with the masses of mud, technically yecept 'slime,' which lie heaped against the embankment of the river, resembling to the untutored eye nothing so much as the gatherings of a scavenger's shovel on the side of a causeway.

The component parts of Bath brick form indeed, in spite of their watery habitat, the greatest possible contrast to the description of the commodity as a 'valuable aid to cleanliness.' Yet this gray adhesive mass is the only material used in the manufacture, and undergoes but little change, and no purification, before fulfilling its object.

The 'slime' itself is deposited by each tide as it comes up, but only within an area of about a mile and a half on either side of the centre of production. The forces of nature are its only agencies, the action of the salt water where it meets the fresh, giving the slime its peculiar and useful properties. Above and below its particular habitat, the deposit reverts to either mud pure and simple, or to a fine sand which, although it has no binding

properties, is largely used for moulding and building purposes.

The machinery for converting this curious product of nature into its saleable form, is, too, of the simplest description, and requires few hands, if the vast output to the civilised world is taken into consideration. The yards where it is made and stored are not many in number, and though varying in size and extent, do not give one the idea of being thronged with workers, while the whole process can be seen in a short space of time.

Let us come down to the yards, which are most of them abutting on the river's edge, to save time in transport. Here we can examine the first process of all, which is to collect the deposit as it gathers, in receptacles specially built for the purpose along the river's banks. These receptacles are called 'slime batches,' and consist of long pits from thirty to forty yards in extent, bricked and boarded, and so shaped as to present a perfectly squared off and even surface, with no angles or slope from which the outgoing tide would carry back in its course much of what it had so lately deposited. On these artificially raised batches the slime lodges just at the high-water level, at the turn of the tide, and the trench will fill up in about two months. In winter the accumulation is less, the freshets disturbing the water, and preventing the sediment settling.

Just above the river's bank, piled to a height of eight or nine feet, in mounds from forty to fifty feet long, the clay, taken from the batches, lies irregularly heaped. The digging out of this clay can be done in the winter months, and gives employment to a number of men when the actual brickmaking is at a standstill. As the spring days lengthen, and the yards can again be thrown open to their full complement of workers, it is the business of the 'temperer,' as he is called, to fill his barrow from these heaps, to supply the pug-mills, which we shall presently see in action. The temperer requires a supply of water for the sufficient moistening of the clay, a mattock for loosening it, and a shovel for digging it out. We cannot do better than follow him as he wheels his load to the mill, and see the whole process through. As you near his destination the air is already thick with motes of dust, and a general atmosphere of gritty particles invades the eyes, nose, and mouth at one and the same moment. Even before you reach the drying sheds, wherein are housed some thousands of bricks, piled symmetrically and according to an undeviating plan for excluding rain while freely admitting air, you are sensible of a general flavour—a blend, as the wine-merchants would say—of brick dust, fresh mortar, and the shakings of house-flannel in rather asphyxiating conjunction.

You can look in at the huge kilns whose fires burn red and sullen behind their gratings, and turning a corner, find yourself in the very centre of the industry. In a small cleared space is the pug-mill, a machine of such simple construction as to vary little from the familiar lines of the domestic coffee-mill. A horse, mercifully hooded and blinded, is harnessed to the single shaft, and paces, hour after hour, his dreary round, seeming hardly more conscious

of the number of his revolutions round the beaten track, than the mill itself of its progress round its own axis. Two or three barefooted lads are actively engaged in bringing shovels full of clay to the side of the mill, into which they press it, to be forced out after a few revolutions in kneaded masses of a dough-like consistency. These, as fast as they emerge, are roughly formed into large balls by the 'off strikers,' whose duty it is to keep the 'moulder' or brickmaker supplied with material, and who lose no time in loading the trollys in which they bear the clay to the sheds close at hand which house the moulders.

These sheds are merely small huts constructed of bricks and boards, as a shelter from sun and rain for the workman who stands within at a table on which he shapes the bricks, and who looks up incuriously at your entrance, without a moment's cessation in his rapid manipulations. His appliances also are few in number. On one side of him stands a box of powdered slime, and a pan of water is within his reach, as not only must the boards be dusted freely to prevent the clay from adhering, but the various instruments in use require moistening from time to time, to make them run more freely over it. His motions are so rapid, that it is almost impossible to follow the several processes by which he catches up the clay, slaps it into a four-sided frame, smooths it off at the top with a thin piece of wood called a striker, turns it down on the stamp which impresses the name of the firm, and, by means of a second and larger board, slips the newly made brick to join a lengthening row at his side. Until your eye gets accustomed to the rotation of his movements, the pile beside him, for which the 'bearer off' has just arrived with his barrow, seems replenished by a sleight-of-hand trick, and you are no longer surprised to hear that a good workman can turn out 400 bricks in an hour, and about 20,000 in a week.

There are but two more processes to be gone through now; the first being the stacking of the bricks in long rows or racks, about five or six bricks high, under a slanting cover of tiles, to be dried by the sun and the wind, unless it is late in the season, and the bricks require more effectual protection, and must be placed in the drying-houses before mentioned, where they can be left for months if needful, before being taken to the kilns to be burned. And it is this process, the final and completing one, which appears to be the most important of all; for great care has to be taken in the burning, and only an experienced 'kiln setter' can tell the precise height and duration of temperature required. The action of the fire must thoroughly reach all sides of the bricks, so that the setting of a kiln is an art in itself. Moreover, all bricks spoiled in the burning must be regarded as bricks spoiled altogether, for they cannot, as before the process, be thrown back on the slime heaps to be re-made. As a kiln holds from 120,000 to 150,000 bricks, this final operation is naturally attended with some anxiety, until the four days required for its completion have expired, and the kiln need only be left to cool on its contents. These are then carried to the storing-houses, where they

are given into the charge of women, who rub each brick over on a stone before stacking them ready for use.

Very little is known of how or when the properties of the slime were discovered, or even as to the origin of the name, Bath brick. It is said that the bricks came before the public at a date contemporaneous with Bath buns, whenever that may be, and were named after them with the design of equalling them in popularity. Another conjecture is that the bricks resemble, when baked, the Bath stone of the district; while the veterans of the yards, if pressed for information on the subject, assert that Bath was the surname of the discoverer of the uses to which the product of the Bridgewater tides could be put.

This last hypothesis, though wanting corroboration, appears perhaps to have the most reason on its side, and it would seem only just that the honour of the name should rest with an initiator so gifted with close and skilful observation as he who could differentiate the deposit of the Parrett from that of any other river.

AFTER THE FACT.*

CHAPTER II.

THE third constable nearly shot me through the head at sight. The twinkle of his pistol caught my eye; I threw up my arms and declared myself a friend—not, as I believe, one second too soon. Never have I seen a man more pitiaibly excited than this brave fellow on the back lawn. Brave he was beyond all question; but cool he was not, and I have reason to believe the conjunction is rarer in real life than elsewhere. The man on the lawn stood over six feet in his boots, and every inch of him was shaking like a jelly. Yet if our quarry had chosen that moment to make a dash for it on this side, I should have been sorry for him; my constable was suffering from nothing more discreditable than over-eagerness for the fray.

Would that I could say as much myself. Already I entirely regretted my absurd proceeding, and longed with all my heart to escape. But it was out of the question. I had put my hand most officiously to the plough, but there it must stay; and as it was too late to reconsider my position, so there was now no sense in investigating the hare-brained impulse upon which I had acted. Yet I turned it over in my mind there, with my naked feet in the cold dew, and could only suppose I had been actuated by an innate desire of mine to 'see fun' wherever fun was to be seen. One thing is certain, if I reckoned at all, it was without the bank-robber, for my old schoolfellow had put him quite out of my head. . . . And here they had him in that house! We saw their lanterns moving from room to room on the ground-floor; and I should be sorry to say

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which of us shivered most (from what different causes), the third constable or myself.

How long we waited I cannot tell; but in a little the lanterns ceased to flit behind the panes. The men had evidently gone up-stairs, and in the darkness we heard a sound as terrifying to me as it was evidently welcome to my companion. 'At last!' said he, and crept up to the back door, open-armed. We had heard the stealthy drawing of bolts; but we were destined, one of us to disappointment, the other to inexpressible relief. The door opened, and it was the sergeant upon whom his subordinate would have pounced. He stood there, beckoning without a word; and so led us to a locked room next the kitchen. His mate had gone round the front way to watch the window; we were to burst in the door and carry the room by storm; and in it, declared the sergeant, we should find our man.

We did not; and again I breathed. The room was not only empty; the window was fastened on the inside; and an accumulation of the loose fittings of the house, evidently for sale to the incoming tenant, seemed to explain the locked door. At least I said so, and the explanation was received better than it deserved. We now proceeded, all four of us (abandoning system in our unsucces), to search the cellar; but our man was not there, and I began to tell myself he was not in the house at all. Thus, as my companions lost their heads and rushed to the attics as one man, I found mine and elected to remain below. The room we had broken into was the one I chose to wait in; for I had explored no other, and wherever else he might be, the robber was not here. Judge then of my feelings when I heard him moving under my feet. Horror glued me where I stood, unable to call out, unable to move; my eyes fast as my feet to the floor, watching a board that moved in the dim light of a candle-end found and lit by one of the constables at our first inspection. The board moved upward; a grimy face appeared through the aperture; it was that of my old school-fellow, Deedes *major*.

'For God's sake, Beetle, help me out of this!' he whispered.

'Deedes!' I could only murmur; and again, 'Deedes!'

'Yes, yes,' said he impatiently. 'Think of the old school—and tell me where they are! Are they gone?'

'Only up-stairs. What on earth's at the bottom of this, Deedes?' I asked him sternly.

'A mistake—a beastly mistake,' said he. 'They gave chase to me shortly after I left you. I got in here, but the one chap daren't follow me alone, and I ripped up this floor and got under while he was whistling away outside. I spotted a loose board by treading on it, and that bit of luck's just saved my bacon.'

'Has it? I'm not so sure,' said I, walking to the door and listening. 'What do they want you for?'

'Would you believe it? For sticking up the bank—when I was out at my lunch! Did you ever hear such rot?'

'I don't know; if you're an innocent man,

why not behave like one? Why hide—they're coming down!' I broke off, hearing them. 'Stop where you are! You can never get out in time!'

His face in the candle-light gleamed very pale between the blotches of dust and dirt; but I fancied it brightened at my involuntary solicitude.

'You will help me?' he whispered eagerly. 'For the sake of the good old school,' he wheedled, playing still upon the soft spot I had discovered to him earlier in the night. It was a soft spot still. I remembered him in the eleven; then overcame the memory, and saw him for what he was now.

'Hush!' said I from the door. 'I want to listen.'

'Where are they now?'

'Looking on the next landing.'

'Then now's my time!'

'Not it,' said I, putting my back against the door.

He rose waist-high through the floor, his dark eyes blazing, his right hand thrust within his coat; and I knew what was in the hand I could not see.

'Shoot away!' I jeered. 'You haven't done murder yet. You daren't do it now!'

'I dare do anything,' he growled. 'But you—you'll never go and give a chap away, Beetle?'

'You'll give yourself away if you don't get under that this instant. They're coming down. Stop where you are, and I'll see you again; try to get out of it, and I promise you you're a gone coon!'

He disappeared without a word, and I ran out to salute my comrades in the hall.

'Well,' cried I, 'what luck?'

'None at all,' replied the sergeant angrily. 'I could have sworn it was this house, but I suppose we must try the next. How we've missed him is more than I can fathom!'

A slaty sky denoted imminent dawn as we emerged from the house; the chill of dawn was in the air, and there was I in nothing but pyjamas. One of the constables remarked upon my condition, and the sergeant (good man) made me a pathetic speech of thanks, and recommended me to my clothes. If they needed further assistance they could get it next door, but he was afraid his man had made a longer flight than that. And indeed when I returned to the spot, in my clothes, an hour later, there was no sign of the police in the road; and I was enabled to slip into the empty house unobserved.

I got in through an open window, broken near the hasp, by which the fugitive himself had first effected an entry. In the early morning light the place looked different and very dirty; and as I entered the room with the burst door, I thought it also very still. I tore up the loose boards, and uttered an exclamation which resounded horribly in the desolation. Deedes was gone. I poked my head below the level of the floor, but there was no sign of him underneath. As I raised it again, however, there was a soft step on the threshold, and he stood there in his socks, smiling, with a revolver in his hand.

For one instant I doubted his intention; the next, the weapon dropped into his pocket, and his smile broadened as though he had read my fear.

'No, no, Beetle,' said he; 'it's not for you. I couldn't be sure it *was* you, that was all. So you're as good as your word! I hardly expected you so soon—if at all!'

'Do you remember my word?' said I meaningly, for his coolness irritated me beyond measure. His very face and hands he had contrived to cleanse at some of the taps. He might have been in bed all night and neglected nothing but his chin and his hair. And this was the man of whom a whole colony would talk this morning, for whom a whole colony would hunt all day.

'Your word?' he said. 'You promised to help me.'

'On terms.'

'Half-profits?' said he. 'Well, I'm agreeable to that. Then you haven't forgotten our conversation last night?'

'At least I'm glad,' I replied, 'to see you make no more bones about your guilt. Where's the money? I want it all.'

'You're greedy, Beetle!'

'Confound you!' I cried. 'Do you think I want to compromise myself by being found here with you? For two pins I'll leave you to get out of this as best you can. You know me. I want that twenty thousand pounds. I want it to pay back into the bank. Then I'll do what I can, but not until.'

I saw his dark eyes blazing as they had blazed in the candle-light. He was between me and the door, and I knew that for any gain to him I never should have left that room alive. At least I believed so then; I believe so now; but at that moment his manner changed, he gave in to me, and yet maintained a coolness and a courage in his peril which more than fascinated me. They made me his slave. I could have screened him all day for the pure æsthetic joy of contemplating those fearless, dare-devil eyes, and hearing that cynical voice of unaffected ease. But the money I insisted on having.

'That's all very well,' said he; 'but I haven't got it here. I planted it.'

'Tell me where.'

'I can't; I could never make it plain; it's not an obvious place at all. Still I accept your terms. Bring me a change of clothes to-night—I daren't face daylight—and I give you my word you shall have the stuff to take back to the bank. I've made a bungle of it; thought of it for weeks, and bungled it after all! It was that Barwon business tempted me. I wasn't ready, but couldn't resist the big haul. All I want now is to get out of it with a whole skin. And by Jove! I see the way! You go to old P'Anson with the money, and get him to say he'll see me. Then I'll tell him it was all a practical joke—done for a bet—anything you like—and if the thing don't altogether blow over, well, I'll get off lighter than I deserve. The old chap will stand by me at all events; he's got his reasons.'

I refrained from asking what they were. I fancied I knew, and hoped I did not. But

Deedes demanded more than a silent consent to his plans.

'Look here: are you on, Beetle, or are you not?'

'Can I trust you?'

'I give you my word upon it; till yesterday it was the word of an honest man.'

'You want a rig-out as different as possible from what you have on?'

'Yes, and some whiskers or something, if you can possibly get hold of any. Your friends are great on theatricals. Ask to look at their props!'

'You'll pay back every penny, and plead a practical joke?'

'Yes, I promise it. Man, it's to my own interest. I see no other way out of it, Beetle. I'm fairly cornered; only help me to pay back before I'm caught, and at least I'll get off light.'

'Very well,' said I. 'On those conditions I will help you. Where were you when I came in?'

'In the cellar; it's safer and also more comfortable than under the floor.'

'Then I advise you to go back there, for I'm off. If I'm found here we shall be run in together!'

He detained me, however, a moment more. It was to put a letter in my hands, a stout missive addressed in pencil to myself.

'You see I've been busy while you were gone,' he said, in a tone quite shy for him. 'Read that after your breakfast. It may make you think less ill of me. And, for the love of Heaven, deliver the enclosures!'

I undertook to do so; my interest, however, was as yet confined to the outer envelope, a clean piece of stationery, never used before.

'Upon my word,' said I, 'you have come prepared! No doubt you have provisions too?'

He produced a packet and a flask. 'Sandwiches and whisky,' said he, 'in case of need!'

I looked hard at him; it may have been my imagination, but for once I thought he changed colour.

'Deedes,' said I, 'you're a cold-blooded, calculating villain; but I must say I can't help admiring you!'

'And trusting me about to-night?' he added, with some little anxiety.

'I wouldn't trust you a bit,' I replied, 'if it weren't to your own interest to do everything you've said you'll do. Luckily, it is. There's a hue and cry for you in this town. Every hole and corner will be watched *but* the bank. You can't hope to get away; and by far your wisest plan is the one you've hit upon, to return the money and throw yourself on your manager's mercy.'

'It is,' he answered, with his foot upon the cellar stairs; 'and you bet old P'Anson won't make it harder than necessary for *me*. It's a clever idea. I should never have thought of it but for you. Old man, I'm grateful; it's more than I deserve!'

And I left him with my hand aching from a grip as warm as that of any honest man; and what was stranger yet, the incredible impression of a catch in my villain's voice. Here, however, I felt I must be mistaken, but my

thoughts were speedily distracted from the anomaly. I had a milkman to dodge as I made my escape from the garden of the empty house. And half-way down the road I met none other than the poor discomfited sergeant of the night.

'Been having another look at the house,' said I, with the frankness that disarms suspicion.

'See anything fresh?'

'Nothing.'

'You wouldn't. I don't believe the beggar was in the house two minutes. Still I thought I'd like to have a squint myself by daylight; and there'll be little damages to repair where we come in. So long, mister; you done your best; it wasn't *your* fault.'

He was gone. I looked after him with my heart in my mouth. I watched him to the gate. Would he come forth alone—or ever? I saw the last of the sergeant; and then—I fled.

ON COMING TO LONDON.

By NICOL WATSON.

PERHAPS there are not in the language another four words of such significance as these: He came to London. No matter of whom said, poet or peasant, merchant or mechanic, they record a step always momentous and not seldom fateful. To recall it brings back the dreams of youth, and the glamour of setting out in life. Wherever the human barque may at last have cast anchor in that wondrous ocean of London, and whatever may have been the adventures of the voyage, matters not. At the call of memory, back again comes the young elation of that day when, with all our bunting aloft, we shot forth in quest of fortune or fame on its waters.

The story-book of our childhood records that when Dick Whittington found himself homeless on his first night in London, he sat down in the streets and cried. Never believe it: the thing is not credible. What he did do was to walk on through her mysterious highways, where every house seemed a palace, and every shop a cave of wealth, building up hopes for the morrow. Boys like Dick do not cry in such circumstances.

It is said also that he was hungry. He may have been without food for a time, but assuredly he was not conscious of it; there were other things than bread to feed upon just then. We are told further that it was the bells of Bow Church that rang out 'Turn again;' but neither is that to be believed. The refrain he heard was the melodious chime of his own brave young heart, to which Bow Bells but lent an opportune accompaniment and confirmation.

A man who had travelled much, seeing many lands and varied peoples, confessed that he had never felt the delight of satisfied curiosity in such fullness as on the day when he first walked into London, a mere youth, and stood amidst the crowd and shops of Regent Street. A born wanderer by nature, and possessed of the means to gratify his desires, his fancy had fixed on Cashmere, out of many places full of wonder and romance, as a land where he should find truest enjoyment. To foster this idea he

avoided all books that affected to treat of Cashmere, and refused to believe that anybody had ever been there. In his imagination he saw it as a region of flowery valleys, soft-watered meads, peaceful vistas, and perpetual sunshine. He duly reached Cashmere, and he has long since returned, a thing he once thought might never happen. Of Cashmere he speaks reasonably and with calm appreciation; but ask him to tell again of how he first came to London, and in answering, his voice takes a tone of enthusiasm and mystery. He refuses to sully the recollection by analysis, or dim it by any later disenchantment. He was young then, and it was London.

Shakespeare 'came to London,' entered, in fact, into eternal fame through its gates. Why he came, or precisely when, is largely a matter of conjecture. Over this, as over so much of his life, lies a veil that he himself never chose to lift. That he was poor is certain, and highly probable that he was quite unfriended. Whether he had any consciousness or persuasion of his almost miraculous gifts we can only guess. The impulse that led him there cannot have been altogether due to chance or whim; but that he could have foreseen the splendid result is altogether impossible. Like many a less-gifted mortal, he sustained the struggle of hope and fear. The first folio of his plays sells to-day for a large sum of money; but let us imagine a romance, worth twenty islands of treasure. Suppose some one, wrenching away a shaky panel in an old house in Warwickshire, came upon a concealed cupboard, wherein lay, thick with the dust of three hundred years, a roll of manuscript, curled and yellow with age. And suppose that, on unfolding it, he found it bore the title 'The Life of me, William Shakespeare.' Here surely would be a record of unparalleled interest, and chiefly the chapter which should tell of how he came to London. Think of what that step was to him, consider the power of his mind, imagine it at the age of fifty, looking back with calm unruffled insight on its own history as a drama, and then reflect what he, Shakespeare, could say about that youthful entry into London, and how depict it. A king's ransom could not buy the chapter, and a temple would be a poor place to house it.

A notable arrival in London was Doctor Johnson. He brought with him a sturdy, well-ordered mind, and no unrealisable dreams. No fever of living or romance of achievement was allowed to embitter him in his first struggles. He set himself resolutely for a long fight. The particulars of these early days are lost to us. Boswell tells us little, and what the Doctor did not confide to him he probably did not mean to be known. It is not difficult to imagine, however, in their most salient features, his first years in London. In a fine passage Boswell tells us that Johnson's sense of superiority over his fellows was not assumed from vanity, but was the result of the natural and constant effort of those extraordinary powers of mind of which he could not but be conscious by comparison. Johnson, says his immortal biographer, did not strut or stand on tiptoe; he only did not stoop. Erect and clear-minded, he lodged at a stay-

maker's, and dined at a tavern off a cut from the joint and bread, which, including a regular penny for the waiter, cost him eightpence per day. His pride was not of the fretful sort that spends itself in laments over the neglect of genius; it was an honest working pride. He knew it was only from the few he had to look for acknowledgment, and there was but one way to gain it—labour and worthiness. Boswell, using the common simile, speaks of him launching on the ocean of London; and if London is an ocean, the men are ships, amongst which towered Johnson's richly freighted galleon, at whose mast-head flew a lord-high-admiral's flag of rectitude and religion. She held on an even course, turning aside for no enchanted isles or bays of luxurious rest. Johnson's coming to London was amply justified. He never again forsook her; he loved her streets, was jealous of her honour, evidenced in his behaviour her dignity and might, dying at last in her embrace, a true Londoner, and a great citizen, to whom fields were fields, and men—souls.

A different and a sadder type of those who come to London was Chatterton, the young poet, who, at the age of barely eighteen years, in bitter disappointment and defeat took his own life, and was buried in a nameless grave. Stripped of all questions of literary morality, his short career is perhaps the most woful in London's history. He entered her gates with but a few pounds in money, but with such a plenitude of wealth in his teeming brain as no other poet ever brought. His rapidity and skill in production were alike marvellous, and he could write with equal force on opposite sides of a question, boasting of the fact. At first it seemed as if he was to succeed. In return for political articles Lord Mayor Beckford extended to him some countenance, although as yet no payment; but in a week or two the death of Beckford extinguished his hopes in that direction. Chatterton's letters to his mother at this time were full of a boastful confidence. Never fear, was their proud purport; I have the ability, and must in the end prevail. His prolific brain turned out essays, operas, songs, anything and everything, but for such a miserable return of cash that he was forced to live on bread alone, which he bought stale that it might last the longer. This is the tragedy: on the one side a proud, self-conscious youth of miraculous gifts; on the other, vast, frowning, unresponsive London,—London, with its avenues of wealth, its pinnacles of fame, its crowns of achievement. It was these that drew him away from Bristol and the mother for whom he retained so pure an affection. Here in London they seemed more distant, more difficult of attainment than when he but dreamed of them afar off at home. The fane that glittered so bravely at a distance was lost to the sight of him who stood at its base. And so in that little dark attic-room near by the turmoil of Holborn, weak from want, but stern in his pride, confessing defeat to no one but himself, the youthful poet swallows the little dose of arsenic, and passes away into silence. He came to London, and the sole gift he earned was a pauper's coffin. The great city neither heeded nor knew, and through her

gates next day passed the due quota of new adventurers for fortune or fame.

With much hesitation and reluctance Carlyle came to London. His motive and reasons may be found set forth with ample fullness in his *Letters and Reminiscences*. Over all these lies the persistent determination not to be of London; to be in it, but not part of it. The effect is picturesque and full of fine moral contrasts, but London was greater than he. True, she wanted him, but he must come to her, not she to him. The prophetic strains sent forth from the seclusion of Craigenputtock fell faintly on a small audience; issuing from London they struck the ear of the universe. Nowhere have the sentiments of the comer to London been set forth with such accuracy and insight as in many passages scattered over Carlyle's letters. In seeking merely to describe the house near the New River in Upper Clerkenwell, where he visited Irving, he depicts the very atmosphere and character of the neighbourhood. An hour in Kensington Gardens gives rise to a subtle picture of the place. He saw London with the poet's eye, looking beneath the obvious, and realising the wondrous life and movement for ever in action. He called London a modern Babylon, a turgid stream of ignoble life, and many other hard names. That was the protest of a proud mind, which held itself aloof. But still she drew him. He came, remained, and was of her. With lavish liberality she has laid Chelsea at his feet as an offering to his memory for all time. Ecclefechan possesses his mortal remains, but these she does not grudge, who holds the record of fifty years of his immortal activity.

Notwithstanding the daily post, and ever-increasing facilities of communication, the human stream still sets towards London. Her gates are thronged as before by new-comers with the same old hopes. Wherever there is an ambition, thither it tends, for sometimes London rewards with a regal hand. She is a world in herself. She holds forth temptations and teaches temperance; she confers fame and imposes humility; bestows wealth and enjoins charity. She has Ariel-like messages for such as can wield spells; monitions that the hills cannot give; lessons that the purling brook is innocent of; and one stone of her pavements can tell more than all the pebbles in the forest of Arden or elsewhere.

THE HERMIT.

By C. J. CUTCLIFFE HYNE.

I.

WHEN ladies go alligator-hunting, they should clearly understand that people whom they find, and associate with most freely, in an Alabaman bayou, should not always be bowed to in Piccadilly. This sounds simple; an axiom, in fact; but because Miss Wilcox did such an uncalled for bowing, things happened which put two most respectable families in a condition of open fury, and I earned dislike as the *Origin of Evil*. As a matter of accuracy my yacht-mate was far more guilty than I. He had gone a-fishing one day in his shirt, and had spent

eight hours sandwiched in between wind and water, and had naturally returned with his legs bitten red raw by the sun. He developed a temper in consequence, that would have made him shunned in the Pit, and I was driven into a deed of temporary separation.

But first, as I am standing here on my defence, let it be clearly understood that I found Acheson before I knew Miss Wilcox was yachting with the Van Sciaks in Mobile Bay, before, in fact, I knew that the lady was in America at all. I had seen her last in a West Kensington drawing-room, and (if the complete truth be told) had slipped her from my thoughts with a perfunctory hand-shake. One meets so many people.

Moreover, Acheson was introduced by the *Parcae*. Being ignorant of the man's existence, I naturally did not seek for him specially. He lived two days deep in swampy country which is not yet charted in the United States maps.

Our yacht was then in the Bayou of Bon Secours (which opens off Mobile Bay), and the Man with the Sunburnt Legs said with many adjectives, that movement for him was out of the question. He remarked that he would stay on the sloop and fish for gaff tops'ls (as they call the cat-fish), and cavallos, and sheep-heads, and sharks, and whatever else he could get; and said that polite conversation was a strain to him. He stated that our crew (of one negro) would make a suitable butt for his future remarks, and put forward the suggestion that I should take myself off. 'Go and hunt alligators up the lagoons, and live like a savage in the swamps, and eat crackers and trout, and catch fever if there's any throwing about,' said the Man with the Sunburnt Legs; 'that'll be about your form.' So I pitied the nigger and went off—in pale pink pyjamas, and the ten-foot yawl-boat.

The sail to the head of the bayou was simple. Then there were two miles to be punted to the long narrow sliver of lagoon which lies inside the sand-dunes of the Mexican Gulf. The cypresses, and the black pines, and the magnolias arched above the cut, and fronds of palmetto which grew on chumps of soil, slashed at one like knives. The atmosphere was a hot moist stew, and there was a smell about it half-way between rotten eggs and the Harrogate pump-room. Also there were flies in all abundance, which fancied themselves masterless dogs, and bit accordingly.

The subsequent sail down the lagoon, under a brazen torrent of sunshine, came as one of the seven pleasures of life. There was a great wall of trees on the landward side, rearing itself from the water's lip in a hedge of undergrowth. To southward, from over the rambling line of dunes, with their fringes of scrub-grass and palmetto, came the dim bellow of the surf as it creamed and crumbled on the white Gulf sand. And down the silver ripples of the lagoon there blew an air, faintly salt, which chilled the wet cotton against one's spine, and pushed the yawl-boat on with the twinkle of fountains under her stem.

The lagoon bayed to an end, and there opened out another channel to be punted through, a narrow winding canal of twirls and branches

through quaking marsh land, a waterway rustling with fish, and ablaze with yellow lilies. Cardinal birds peered at one from the bushes, and purple herons thrust out curious beaks from the grass-clumps. It was all very peaceable, and extremely hot.

Then there came a lake with islands, a lake of water called by courtesy fresh, which was lemon-yellow to look through, and black to look upon. It swarmed with fish, which took the hook, and were supped upon for their sins; and because there was no whisky in the yawl-boat for dilution, it served as a beverage in all its sulphurous nastiness. Then the sun dipped behind the forests at the back, and night followed like the shutting down of a box. One mounted a bull's-eye lantern on the hat-band, which would shine down a rifle's sights, and put out again in the boat, paddling stealthily. It is not always easy to distinguish between a firefly and the gleam from an alligator's eye, and shots are apt to be wasted and the neighbourhood scared. But on that night fortune held, and the lead went home six several times. Then the dead were made more safely dead with the axe, and their slayer laid him down to sleep on the boat's floor with his head beside the centre-board trunk.

So passed my first night away from the sloop. The morning was occupied in the process of skinning, and then once more on towards the east. There were more lakes and more canals all full of their own new wonders; and ever away in the distance on the starboard hand was the noise of the surf as it broke where the logs from the Gulf rivers bristle in the milky sand. In late afternoon I came to a lagoon with a wooded island in it, and amongst the trees of the island, when they grew distinct from one another, I saw a man.

I bore down to him under sail (for there was a spanking breeze coming in from the sea), and when we were within hailing distance, the boat grounded.

'Do you want to land here?' he shouted.

'I don't mind if I do.'

'Then shove off again, and drop down to the tail of the island and luff up sharp where you see a barked tree on the beach. There's no deep water till you come to there.'

I did as he told me, put the boat's nose on a small beach of pebbles, and waited, smoking. I waited half an hour maybe, and then he strolled up very leisurely with his thumbs in the waistbelt of his trousers. I can't say he seemed over pleased to see me. He asked with point what I had come for.

I told him, and then said, 'By the way, you're a Varsity man, aren't you?'

'Yes, Oxford: the House. You are, too, I've a notion?'

'From over the way: Pembroke.'

'Well, if you've nothing better on, leave your boat and come up to my place. Sorry I didn't tumble to you at first, but then you don't look over respectable just now. Are you much down on your luck?'

'Oh, I'm not hunting alligators professionally. I'm here for amusement.'

I concluded he was there because he had got into trouble with the Law of the Land elsewhere, but I did not suggest this, because it is

considered rude to touch upon family matters uninvited. But after a minute he broached the topic himself. 'I'm here for amusement myself,' he said. 'I'm here permanently.'

By this time we had got into a bit of a clearing inside the wall of trees—a patch of sorghum, another of sweet potatoes, another of corn with stalks that stood ten feet high, and a goodly planting of green tobacco plants, with a shambling palmetto shuck at the back.

'Faith,' I said, 'you've queer notions of a pleasure-resort.'

'I'm a man,' he said, 'with an imagination. Consequently I make a most comfortable hermit. Come in and take a hammock. Where's our eight on the river?'

I told him, and we went on hard at boating shop till the sun went out. It was wonderful what a lot of men we knew in common when we began to talk things over, and it turned out that we had rowed against one another at Henley for two events. 'Of course,' he broke out at once; 'you are the Macdonald who swam down from Marsh lock to Henley bridge in your clothes the last night of the races because you said you hadn't been allowed a decent dip all through the training.' And 'By Jove!' I said, 'you are Atcheson of the Leander who steered their Stewards' four from bow, and ran five feet of her through the side of an oak dinghy.' Whereat we both laughed, and knew one another extremely well. After this I asked him if he ever ate.

'Why, yes,' he said, 'I'd forgotten. What'll you have? There's some boiled fish, and sweet spuds and molasses. The fish is on the floor in the far corner there, and the rest is mixed ready in the saucepan. There are no plates. Help yourself.'

'Candles?' I suggested.

'Haven't such a thing; or lamp. Can't you feed in the dark? There will be a moon above the tree-tops directly, if you want light.'

'I say, am I to ladle up this stuff with my fingers?'

Atcheson laughed. 'I'm not going to lend you mine,' he said. 'Why, what a luxurious sybarite you must be. Climb back, Macdonald, down the centuries, and enjoy yourself as Primitive Man. Feast and be filled, and then come to your hammock again and talk intellectually. There's a tin down there somewhere with water in it, or coffee, I forget which. Drink when you're dry.'

I began to have a strong idea that the man was mad; but I stopped my hunger on his victuals for all that; and then relit my pipe and went on with the talk.

From the other side of the clearing came the noises of the night—the chatter of katydids and the rustle of jarflies, the love-song of tree crickets and toads, the deep reed notes of frogs in their patches of marsh; and through all mingled the heavy diapason of the surf, from across the dunes, and the forest, and the black waters of the lake, mellowed by its passage through the purple night. I am the most practical and unpoetical creature in the world, as a general thing, but the influence of it was too heavy for me. I started on to chat again about the boats, and about women, and yachts,

and books, and the other interests of the outer world; but the things fell flat, and presently the talk died out of us altogether. We lay there, hung in silence, and sensuously drinking in what the night gave up. We must have spent hours without throwing down a word.

Then Atcheson spoke. 'That is my usual concert,' he said. 'One gets to like it.'

I did not answer at once. I could not, although his words came clearly enough to my ears. A sort of mesmeric doze pinned me down.

When I managed to rouse, I felt angry with myself for weakness, and spoke with a sneer. 'You must find it mighty monotonous,' I said.

'A mistake, an utter mistake. It is full of infinite variety: it never repeats itself; and I know, because I have listened to it now for three years, in calm, in cyclone, in every kind of night which God will give. It is His orchestra, but until the taste has grown, one does not know this.'

Another pause. Then, 'Are you going to write about this Walden Pond of yours?' I asked.

'I am no Thoreau with a pen. Besides, I am selfish, and if I could set this down I would not. One man in ten thousand might understand, some wild fellow, who had lived in the air, with the things that grow in the air away from the pestilence of cities, and he would never lift a book; but the others would either yawn or deride, and I take it this is no matter to be profaned. And yet there is nothing new in it all: only the old things changed. I have rambled over the world, and seen and tried most pleasures: the sounds here give it all back to me again, only here it is idealised.'

'I hardly understand.'

'Listen to the Gulf surf rumbling on those beaches.'

'It is like the roar of the Prater, or the Strand, or the Rambla, or Broadway, as it comes to an upper window.'

'You can hear that: I can make out more, because my ear is trained. I can hear the voices and what they say—the tales of love, and hope, and hate; the merry laugh, the curses, the wild and bitter laugh; and in the tree-tops yonder I can see these people who move and live, and follow them as they pass along, with their skirts rustling, and their shoulders jostling one another. The place is full of life to me and full of company, and I can revel in it all without being mixed in the dirt and the pains and the squalor. And it is very beautiful also. What picture did you ever see like that?'

He waved a hand to where the red moon and a patch of purple sky hung framed in a black arch of the pines. In the foreground the lake lay twinkling beyond a great fan of palms. On the flank was spread a thick magnolia tree, full of scented blossom, and splashed with cones of coral pink.

I looked, and hung on my gaze; and once more the silence grew between us.

The spell of the place was closing down again and pinning me. I roused myself with an effort, and swore for relief. 'Atcheson,' I said, 'I believe you are either the devil, or

Circe with a changed sex. Be merciful and speak no more, and let me sleep. If I listen on I shall forget the place from whence I am come, and stay here, and become as one of the swine.'

'I am sorry,' Acheson said, 'and because I do not want converts or companions I will say no more. Therefore sleep you.'

II.

The miasma of the lotus was in my veins, and I knew it and feared. I woke sullen and suspicious with the first lift of day, and got down to my boat. Acheson came after and cried a pleasant *auf wiedersehen*, and I answered with a scowl and threw out the sculls. I was very angry with myself, and still more frightened. I had been in that kind of temptation before, and knew what it was afterwards to wish that I had fallen. Consequently I made up my mind to get back to the yacht without a halt, and so put in a day of savage toil; and because the sun above burned like a kettle of molten brass, and the air baked, the material pains of the body gave me other matters to think about. And when I made out the sloop's riding-light dancing on her forestay, I knew there was another antidote close at hand. The Man with the Sunburnt Legs was a very carnal and practical sort of person.

He received me affably. He fed me first with sumptuousness, referred to the decrease of his own affliction, and then told me that we and the oysterman no longer had the bayou to ourselves.

'The Van Sciaks have come in with their schooner,' he said; 'and they've a girl on board who says she knows you—a Miss Wilcoxn.'

'Ah,' I said, 'I know her well enough. We used to see a goodish deal of one another once.'

'If you mean that you were spoons on the lady,' said the Man with the Sunburnt Legs, 'I guess you'd better forget that. She's engaged to a Yankee man from Massachusetts now, a person with culture and dollars—heaps of dollars—about ten million of 'em, so I believe. And being *anno aetatis suae* twenty-eight, she knows what is a soft thing, and is not likely to chuck it up. Take off those rags and put on something respectable, and we'll make the nigger scull us across. She said I was to bring you when you turned up.'

'Not now. At present I am going to turn in to sleep. Probably I shall die in the course of the night. It will save me the trouble and pain of kicking myself if I do.'

'Did you,' said the Man with the Sunburnt Legs, 'in the course of your wanderings find a place where they sold corn whisky? Oh, you're snoring already, are you? Surely it's drunk you are, my son, because otherwise you're come back very dotty. What rot to go and live like a hermit all by your lonesome.'

III.

Miss Wilcoxn was a young woman with a great notion of having her own way. Had I known her less, I should have tried to avoid speaking on a matter which I preferred to keep silence upon. Being acquainted as we

were, I did not bring out any futile stubbornness.

She wanted to know what there was to be seen in the lagoons and lakes, and I told her, with one reservation; but my tale did not quite hold water, and she twigged that there was something left out, and demanded to hear what it was. Whereupon I shrugged my shoulders helplessly, and told her about Acheson, chapter, commas, and verse, merely lying in the solitary instance of a personal name.

'You say that he is a Christ Church man?' she demanded, when I had finished.

'Did I say so?'

'You did; and you mentioned also that he rowed against you at Henley for the Stewards' and the Ladies' Plate. That fixes him. If you'd done me the compliment to remember, I was down there on a houseboat that year. And so, of course, his name isn't Foote at all?'

'Perhaps it's got changed,' I admitted weakly. 'Men's names do, you know, when they climb down the scale as he's done.'

'Hum,' she said, and pulled down a chart of the Northern Gulf Coast from its cleat in the cabin roof. 'Now show exactly where this hermit lives.'

'The chart's all wrong. The place in there isn't surveyed.'

'Precisely. But you've been there, and you know the lay of it. Don't be shy. Your powers, my dear Mac, in that direction are notorious. Here's a pencil. Fill it in accurately, and tell me the landmarks from the Gulf side.'

'If you go up there, and see this fellow, and sleep even one night in those swamps, you'll catch fever and die. Also, the mosquitoes and the sandflies will eat most of you before death comes. Don't be a fool. What more do you want to know about the man? Stay here, and I will tell you.'

'My excellent Mac, I have pumped you dry. For the rest I must see him myself. And I shall not die of fever, because I shall get this yacht to take me round to the outside, and go from there, and so not have to spend a night ashore at all. Nor will the insects of the swamps devour me, because I own a wide-brimmed hat, and a large and most excellent veil.'

'Well,' said I, 'if you will do this thing, at all events you shall do it decently. There's a small creek on beyond, up which we will incite the Van Sciaks to take the yacht. I'll bring our sloop. We will go with the pretence of alligator-hunting.'

'You are an excellent person, Mac. You always see your own tastes aren't trampled on.'

'My dear Mary, the alligator-shooting is a piece of deception for which I blush. It is entirely on your behalf that I take up any more of it. You ought to be extremely grateful; not sarcastic. Go now and wheedle the Van Sciaks, and I'll go and get my own boat under weigh.'

In an hour's time the two yachts were standing out board and board over the shallow bar which guards the entrance to Bayou Bon

Secours. There was a romping breeze from the north, and we span at eight knots past the low shore, where only the tree-stems show above the water. Then we slipped out through the channel between Dauphin Island and Fort Morgan, and lifted to the swing of the outer sea, running east along the Gulf Coast. Night had fallen before we made the creek, and we tacked in over the bar by blazing moonlight, with centre-boards up, and the breeze eddying light and fitful through the trees. That night we took the rifles and the bull's-eye lanterns, and shot a dozen alligators by way of giving ourselves countenance.

Of course, Miss Wilcox did go to see Atcheson. I took her to the island myself, through an intolerable maze of lakes and waterways, and told the Van Sciaks that we hoped to slay alligators by daylight, which is probably the baldest excuse a grown man with a pretty invention ever made. But I will give the girl credit for one thing—she didn't stay talking to the fellow for more than ten minutes. What she said to him I don't know, because my instructions were to stay by the boat and see if it didn't drift away. But when she came back, and we rowed off, she found cause to comment that Atcheson was a curious handful.

'I told you that before,' I said. 'Now you've learnt it for yourself, I trust you're satisfied?'

'I am entirely, Mac. I hope you are too?'

'I don't know about that. But I do know I'm extremely hot.'

'Well then, hurry and get back, and I'll fix you up a mint-julep. We've ice on board, and all the other necessities, and Mr Van Sciak has shown me how to use a swizzle-stick. He said it might come in useful, as I had thoughts of settling in America, don't you know?'

'So I've been given to understand. As you have not had my congratulations before, please accept them now in all fullness. I suppose I'm scratched from the running now?'

'Com-pletely, my dear boy. And it doesn't surprise you in the least, or disappoint you either. We'd have quarrelled like cat and dog. We've no tastes in common. For instance, except for perhaps once, I loathe alligator-hunting.'

And so we went back, and I was rewarded not with one julep only, but several.

The Van Sciaks wanted to go to Mississippi Sound next day, and as the other man and I were bound for Pensacola, in Florida, the yachts separated, and I did not see Miss Wilcox again for some time. But I heard of some of her doings, which, to say the least of them, seemed eccentric. Also, which was worse, they were unworldly. Young men with culture and ten million dollars are not to be picked up every day; nor should they be thrown lightly aside.

But when I got back to town, and, to my vast astonishment saw Atcheson there, then a light began to dawn upon me. He was marching down Pall Mall as large as life, and very resplendent. He had on a frock-coat down to his heels, the last gift of the gods

in the way of hat and tie, and a new reaped chin, which stood out refreshingly white against the rest of his countenance. He shook me by the hand and said I was a great man. Then we went into a club and talked for several hours without a stop, and he explained to me how a hermit cannot hermitise unless he has a disease vulgarly known as the 'hump.'

'It's enjoyable enough whilst you have that,' said Atcheson, 'but when the hump goes, the bottom's knocked out of the hermit business altogether. What a filthy, squalid brute I must have been all that time.'

'But you liked it well enough.'

'I believe I did, in my morbid way. But it's over and done with now, thank Heaven! and "I'm going to marry Yum-Yum, Yum-Yum, your anger pray tarry"—Oh, bother, I've forgotten the words. Jove! I shall have a lot to pick up again.'

'That's a fact,' I said. 'Ordinary sanity amongst other things. And so you're going to marry Mary Wilcox, after all?'

'It's a sure thing. Of course, her people were mad, because I'm not very well off, don't you know; and the other Johnnie's people are mad, too, at his being cut out. But you're the person they can't get over. It's you they are wild at, principally. They will persist in it that you're at the bottom of the whole thing. Isn't it delightfully funny?'

I didn't think it funny at all. I make quite sufficient enemies off my own bat for personal consumption. And, besides, as I have said, if the other fool hadn't got his legs sunburned, I shouldn't have gone off *solus* in the yawl-boat, and meddled with Atcheson at all.

'OUR UNINVITED GUESTS.'

WE live in one of the western counties of Ireland, and last winter our house was invaded by unexpected guests. These were two robins! When first they came, they explored every nook and corner in the house, and were seemingly satisfied, and made themselves familiar with everybody, remaining indoors at night, but flying off every morning. It was amusing to see them dart at their reflection in the mirrors; but they soon learned they were attacking an imaginary foe. After some time, we observed them carrying in their beaks withered leaves, moss, and other dry substances; and accident disclosed that nest-building operations were being busily conducted. The place selected was a book-shelf near a window in the drawing-room. The nest when discovered was nearly finished, and much ingenuity had been expended on its construction. The books—a library edition of Dickens—did not occupy the entire space on the shelf; so the birds laid the foundation on the shelf at the back of the books, and filled up the unoccupied space next the wall with the building materials to the height of the books, and then formed the nest over the ends

of the volumes. However, this nest was left unfinished, and the birds went to the Library: they displayed an evident love for literature! Here they began two nests, both in book-cases in different parts of the room. Neither of these sites pleased the builders, for eventually they resumed work on the first nest in the drawing-room, and soon completed it. If one ventured near the nest during the progress of building, the birds would fly out and, with a shrill chirp, peck the hand or head of the intruder; but unless they went near the nest, the robins did not otherwise notice the occupants of the room.

Spring was now advancing, and the birds seldom stayed indoors. When the hen began laying, she came in through our bedroom window—which we kept open at night—between five and six every morning, flew down the staircase into the room below, and, having laid her egg, went off till next morning. This continued for four mornings, and then she began hatching on five eggs, on the 14th of April, and the young birds were out of the shells on the 28th. The eggs were all fertile; so we had five young robins. The mother sat on the youthful brood for about eight days; she then left the nest, and spent the nights out of doors with her mate, returning to the house between four and five A.M. to feed the young ones. On the 10th of May the young birds abandoned the nest, and did not return even at night, but perched here and there on different articles in the room. We kept them in the house at much inconvenience till the 13th of May: then opening all windows and doors, we induced them to take wing. One or two wished to stay, but we gave them no encouragement.

From the day the young birds were hatched, they were fed by the old ones. The flies and spiders had a bad time of it, as they formed the principal article of diet. Occasionally, a feast of worms or caterpillars was provided. It is amazing with what precision a robin will dart at the flies on a ceiling, capturing them all. We had no reason to suppose the robins intended leaving their nest when they did, except that the night previous to their flitting, one of the young lay on the verge of the nest, as if crowded out. The birds lay in the nest, three underneath and two atop. The parents guarded the nest jealously, and attacked any one who ventured near it. It is asserted that birds will forsake their nest if it is handled; but we found this to be untrue.

It is difficult to understand the care and watchfulness exercised by the old birds during the day, when they abandoned their home during the night. Although the eggs were laid on different days, the birds came out of the shells on the same day, even the same hour. The robins always attended us at meals, hopping about the table, and pecking at everything. They were specially fond of butter. They sometimes alighted on my knee and looked about from this vantage-ground quite unconcernedly. While the hen was sitting, her mate kept her supplied with food, though the hen often left the eggs for a considerable time, returning with her plumage wet, as if she had been taking a

dip. On these occasions she did not resume her place on the eggs till she spent some time in preening herself.

Even while feeding the young ones out of doors, the pair were preparing for another family, and, as before, began building nests in different parts of the house. Eventually, the new nests were neglected, and the hen laid an egg in the old nest on the 25th of May. An egg which had been previously laid, and found on the kitchen table, we placed in the nest. On the 29th of May the fourth egg was laid; and on the 10th of June we observed one of the old birds on the edge of the nest with a caterpillar wriggling in its beak. Looking in, we saw that the second brood for the season was in possession. On the 22d of June the young left the nest, perching about the room as before. The hen did not sit so long on the second as on the first brood, and yet both broods left the nest at the expiration of the same number of days. The courage of the parent birds is remarkable, especially that of the mother; nothing but death alone could abate her love and passion. We tested her bravery several times, but found her courage dauntless.

We have taken pains to note the particulars we have submitted in this paper; and if a lover of the feathered tribes has gained any information from our account of the habits of our uninvited but welcome guests, we shall feel amply repaid for any inconvenience we may have encountered to give our robin friends house-room. May we add one other remark? Although frequently on the west coast of Ireland both in winter and summer, we have never seen a robin near the sea.

A MISER'S TREASURE.

THE miser lay on his dying bed,
And no voice by him made moan;
No prayer was said, and no tears were shed—
He died as he lived, alone;
And his trembling fingers, damp and cold,
Drew the iron band away
From the guarded casket, stained and old,
Where his hoarded treasures lay.

But his death-dimmed eyes in the fading light
Looked not on the rubies rare,
Nor the deep-sea pearls, nor the diamonds bright
That an empress well might wear;
And the gold that he erstwhile loved so much,
That he perilled his soul to gain,
Was brushed aside with a careless touch,
And a glance of cold disdain.

And when strangers looked on the dead in awe,
In his close-clasped icy hands
Not Golconda's flashing gems they saw,
Nor the gold of Africa's sands;
And no jewels fair beyond compare
'Tween the fingers stiff shone through,
But a golden tress of a woman's hair
In a ribbon of faded blue.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 629.—VOL. XIII. SATURDAY, JANUARY 18, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

OBEAH.

IF Mr Casaubon had lived to complete his *magnum opus*, 'A Key to All Mythologies,' one can imagine that a most interesting volume might have been given to the world on the subject of Obeah. Yet it would probably have been too elaborately learned for 'the general,' and it is because we imagine that the word conveys but a very vague meaning to the majority of readers, that we think a little discussion of the subject will be appreciated.

All readers of books of African travel, especially those relating to the West Coast, and of books about the West Indies, are more or less familiar with the word.

The word Obeah itself is applied generally to the system, but properly it means one who practises Obi. Thus, to speak of an Obeah man, or an Obeah woman, is to a certain extent tautological, yet custom has sanctioned it. Obi, in plain English, is sorcery or witchcraft, and it is an outgrowth of fetichism; but curiously, although we hear much about fetichism from African travellers, it is mostly from the West Indian negroes that we gather our knowledge of Obi. And then it is no longer the case, as it was in the time of Bryan Edwards, that only those born in Africa practise it. There must be few, if any, of the negroes now living in the West Indies who were born in Africa, and yet the practice is probably as rife as ever, although more secret. Superstition dies hard in all races, but it appears never to die at all among the black races, however they may become Christianised. Be this as it may, Obi was once so prevalent in Jamaica, and was so much associated with mysterious deaths by poison among the negroes, that a law had to be passed for its suppression. But it was not suppressed—it was only concealed.

Obeah, as far as can be gathered, seems a word used only in the West Indies, although Obi, from which it is derived, is in use on the West Coast of Africa to denote witchcraft.

Of the form Obi takes among the modern Dahomean, one learns a good deal from Captain Ellis, in his book about *The Land of Fetich*. Thus, when a Dahomean falls ill, he fancies the departed spirit of one of his ancestors wishes to see him below, and is undermining his health in order to hasten the interview. So the sick man consults a fetichman, and begs or buys his influence with the unquiet spirit, so as to defer the visit. The fetichman takes all the cowries he can get, and prophesies according to what he conceives the state of the patient to be. If he thinks the sick man will recover, he professes to have obtained by his charms permission to postpone the interview indefinitely; if the case is doubtful, he procrastinates; if the man seems certain to die, he professes to have exhausted his powers without succeeding in conciliating the unquiet spirit. The future habitation of the Dahomean soul, it should be explained, is supposed to be in a gloomy region under the earth, and very like the world *minus* its beauty and pleasures.

On the Slave Coast there is a peculiarly extensive development of Obi in the form of professional poisoners. All over the West Coast, indeed, the practice of getting rid of enemies by poison, with the aid of the fetichman, is common, but in some places it is a separate profession. The poisoners are necromancers (in the West Indies they would be called Obeah men), who compound spells by which they propose to attain their ends. They actually use, however, more material and more deadly means, for they are intimately acquainted with all the properties of many vegetable poisons quite unknown to the European pharmacopœia. Many persons fall victims to their fatal knowledge, and medical men have been unable to recognise the symptoms as those of any known poisons. They are equally well acquainted with the antidotes for their deadly drugs; and when a native has cause to believe that he has been poisoned, his only chance is to send for one of those gifted Obeah men to

charm away the effects. Thus it is not uncommon for one of the fraternity to take one bribe to charm a man's death, and another bribe from the victim to charm him alive again.

In Sierra Leone this species of Obi is called witchcraft by law, and is strictly forbidden, and heavily punished when discovered. Yet even in Sierra Leone, which has been so long under English influence, we learn from Mr Lethbridge Banbury's book about the colony, that the old superstitions and customs still cling to the natives. They steal away beyond the arm of authority to make sacrifices to fetich, and to institute trials by ordeal of both fire and poison.

The medicine man is still a power at 'the White Man's Grave,' and Obi flourishes in spite of the law. To be a witch, we are told—the name is applied to both sexes—one must have either taken human life or be credited with some supernatural power. A successful medicine man must possess quick powers of penetration, decision, and a knowledge of subtle vegetable poisons, such as those above referred to. He is thus able to both kill and cure with what seems to the uninitiated to be the same material. These men are consulted even by the educated natives, and the trust and belief in them are unbounded.

Such is West African Obeah. And now let us see how very like the Obeah man of the West Indies is to the fetich man, or medicine man, or professional poisoner of his own race in West Africa. One can scarcely take up any book about the West Indies without finding some reference to Obeah. Has not even Mr Froude written: 'Behind the immorality, behind the religiosity, there lies, active and alive, the horrible revival of the West African superstition—the serpent-worship, and the child-sacrifice, and the cannibalism. There is no room to doubt it.' Those who want to know something of the child-sacrifice and cannibalism can consult Sir Spenser St John's chapter on Vaudoux-worship in his work on Hayti; but in the present article we are dealing only with the milder forms of Obeah.

The following is an instance of what Mr Hesketh J. Bell saw with his own eyes in the British colony of Grenada, one of the Windward Islands.

A planter had in his grounds a fine lot of two thousand plantains, but could never get a bunch of the fruit for the table. The 'wretched niggers' of the neighbourhood always walked off with it as quickly as it ripened. As neither watchmen nor spring-guns had any effect in checking the depredations, he determined to have the garden 'dressed' by an Obeah man.

Accordingly, one day he was by appointment waited on by a wizened old African, attended by a small black boy carrying a large covered basket. Mokombo, on being told what was wanted, promised: 'Me go set strong Obeah for dem, and dey nebber go tief your plantain again.' Instructed to go to work, Mokombo took up his basket and went down among the trees, which were planted in long rows in a large field. The plantain is much the same as the banana—the fruit growing in

enormous bunches out of a soft fleshy trunk, the leaves on which spread out like those of a palm.

This is what the Obeah man proceeded to do. Out of his basket he took a number of large and small medicine-bottles filled with some mysterious liquid; then taking up a position in front of a plantain, he tied one of the bottles on to a branch of the fruit, muttering the while an incantation in some African lingo, completing the spell by frequent genuflections and waving of the arms. He went through all the rows in the same fashion. When he had used up his stock of bottles, he took from his basket a small black wooden coffin. This he placed, with a good deal of ceremony, in the branches of a cocoa-tree, and on the top of the coffin he put a saucer containing a little water with a hen's egg floating in it. He then walked right round the field, muttering his incantation and waving his arms, after which he came to the planter and declared that the Obeah was complete—not another bunch of plantains would be stolen. Receiving his fee, he departed, saying: 'Me let go plenty cribo, Massa, and now if any one da go and tief dem plantains, he must go swell up and bust!'

Criboes are large black serpents, very common in the island, but quite harmless. The planters, indeed, rather protect them, as they wage war on the rats. These criboes, however, are supposed to become deadly under the influence of the Obeah man, and the negroes believe that when he 'dresses' a garden or field, he sets free in it a swarm of ferocious criboes, who will assuredly destroy any one who goes into the place for the purpose of stealing. They know well enough that there is no venomous snake in the island, yet the African dread and veneration of the serpent is ineradicable.

On the particular occasion referred to, the bottles were examined after Mokombo's departure, and found to contain nothing but seawater, coloured with a little laundry blue, with a dead cockroach floating on the top. Some of them had also a few rusty nails, or a bit of red flannel. But there might be any sort of rubbish in the mystic bottles, for no negro would dare to touch them. Nor would he go near the trees on which they were hung, to steal, unless he was prepared to 'swell up and bust.'

It is hardly credible, but charms of this sort are believed in and practised among the negroes who are reputedly converted, and who regularly attend the services in the English churches and chapels. All the teaching of Christian ministers and schoolmasters for fifty years has not been able to destroy the dark superstitions brought over with the cargoes of slaves from the African coast, during the previous two centuries.

It is true that the educated negroes do profess to be ashamed of Obeah (or Wanga, as it is sometimes called), but not the less do they cling tenaciously in secret to the mysteries which their fathers and mothers taught them to dread and venerate. Any man who has a reputation for working Obeah is regarded with the greatest fear, and treated with the utmost deference.

The difficulty in contending with these superstitions is felt alike by Roman Catholic and Protestant teachers. Grenada was a French colony until about a hundred years ago, and there are still many French Catholic priests there. One of them told Mr Bell that the deep-rooted belief of the people in the power of Obeah and witchcraft met him at every turn. He had tried everything to combat the baneful influence, and to make the negroes ashamed of their ignorance and credulity, but, he had sorrowfully to confess, with very little effect. He had even tried the Japanese method of punishing a whole street for the misdeeds of one resident in it, if he found one dabbling in Obeah—but all to no purpose.

This priest described the contents of the hut of an Obeah man which he had examined. The man had died, and none of the people would enter the house, so the priest went himself. He found the dirty little place littered with Obeah utensils. There were vials containing some unholy liquor, ready to be exchanged for their weight in silver; rags, feathers, bones of cats, parrots' beaks, dogs' teeth, broken bottles, grave dirt, rum, and egg-shells. Under the bed was found a large earthen jar containing an immense number of round balls of earth or clay of various dimensions, and whitened on the outside. Some of these contained hair and rags; others, skulls of cats, stuck round with human or dogs' teeth and beads. In a tin canister was found the sorcerer's most valuable treasure, seven bones from a rattlesnake's tail, valued at five dollars each, for amulets or charms. There was also a yard of hangman's cord, intended to be retailed to the negroes by the inch as a preservative against bad luck. In another old tin was found his hoard—bundles of bank-notes and a number of gold pieces, amounting altogether to such a considerable sum as to prove that the trade of the Obeah man is an exceedingly lucrative one. The money was handed over to the Government, and the rubbishy contents of the hut publicly burned.

Some of the Obeah men possess a reputation for finding out robberies, and these are among the most successful of the class. No doubt they are greatly helped by a good memory, skill in cross-examination, and intimate knowledge of all the tricks and devices of their African brothers. Others of them are professional finders of buried treasure, and no doubt buried treasure has frequently been found in islands which were so often assailed by the buccaneers in the days of old; but whether there is much now left to reward the professional treasure-seeker may well be doubted.

Before the emancipation of the slaves, Obeah was rampant in all the West Indian colonies, and laws and regulations had to be expressly framed to deal with it. In those days there were few large estates which had not one Obeah man at least among the slaves, while some had two or three. These were the oldest and most crafty of the blacks, whose hoary heads and harsh aspect, together with skill in the manipulation of vegetable drugs and poisons, easily imposed on the weak and credulous. An Obeah man in those days would be distin-

guished by wearing the hair long, or by some other peculiarity of habit or costume.

We have it on the authority of a planter, that even now a negro will not hesitate to give an Obeah man four or five dollars for a love-spell, although he would grudge half a dollar for a bottle of medicine to relieve some painful malady. The incantations usually take place at midnight, and every precaution is taken to conceal the ceremonies from the whites.

We learn further from Mr Bell that the darker and more dangerous side of Obeah is that under cover of which poison is used to a fearful extent. The dangerous and often fatal effects of many a magic draught are set down by the negroes to magic, and not to the simple effects of the poisonous herbs which grow in every pasture, and with the properties of which every Obeah man is thoroughly conversant. Deaths are reported at the registrar's as the result of 'beely bad cold, Sah,' which may as often as not be due to Obeah. At all events the laws relating to declarations of death and inquest are so defective, that the planters are satisfied that many deaths do occur through poisoning which are set down to some simple malady.

Such, then, is Obeah as it exists, and is supposed to exist, in our own colonies. It has a far stronger hold, however, in Hayti, where the awful orgies of Vaudoux-worship are practised.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

CHAPTER I.—MONEY OR POLITICS.

'Yes, Sir George,' said the lawyer, looking mighty serious. 'We have at length ascertained how you stand. Your father conducted—misconducted—his affairs without consulting us—and we knew nothing of what was going on—nothing at all.'

I inclined my head. I had already heard certain things which had led me to expect something unpleasant. What had happened was this: My father, the second baronet and son of the well-known judge and lawyer, had died five weeks or so before this interview. He died at the age of fifty-two, having led a perfectly quiet and apparently harmless life. Harmless! You shall see. I was twenty-five, and after the usual run of Eton and Cambridge, I had my chambers in Piccadilly and my club, and led the life customary among young men of fortune; of course, I knew nothing, I had learned nothing, and I could do nothing, except work a little with a lathe. I was not bookish, or artistic, or scientific, or musical, or literary, or anything. Therefore the intelligence that I was about to receive proved even more delightful to me than it would have been to a man who could do things, write things, and sell things.

'I have here everything ready for you. Before you look at these papers, Sir George, be prepared for a very—a most painful surprise.'

'Tell me all—at once.'

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'Then, Sir George—it is a most distressing communication to make—but you are young, which is the only consolation—young and strong—and, I doubt not, a philosopher'—

'I am especially and above all things a philosopher. But pray get on.'

'Your grandfather, the judge, with his magnificent, his unequalled practice, rolled up what we call in the profession a colossal fortune. It was over a quarter of a million, which your father, then forty years of age, inherited. When he died a few weeks ago, at the age of fifty-two, he had managed by Stock Exchange gambling, to get through the whole of it—with his country house and his town house. Ah! Sir George, why—why did not the judge entail the whole? It maddens me to think of it! He lost all—everything.' The lawyer rubbed it in with resolution. 'You have no longer any fortune left: you have no house: my young friend, you have nothing but a few scraps and crumbs left of that splendid fortune that seemed to be yours two months ago.'

'Lost the whole of the fortune? In ten years? He could not.'

'Your father, in ten years, lost the whole of his fortune. You have got left, practically, nothing.'

'Thank you. I have got nothing. I shall realise it presently. It makes one feel chilly. I have got nothing.' I put my fingers in my waistcoat pocket. 'Here are some coins. They are mine, I suppose? There are two or three hundred pounds standing to my account at the bank; are they mine, too?'

'Yes. And to speak of crumbs and scraps, I think I may save a little something for you out of the wreck. But it will be a mere trifle. I estimate it at the most as three thousand pounds.'

'Oh! I have three thousand pounds. You are quite sure you have done your very worst?'

'I can do nothing worse than this for you.'

I got up and stood over the empty fireplace. 'I suppose,' I said slowly, 'that it is very bad. I am not a person of imagination, you know, and I cannot feel, all at once, how sad it is. A thing like this cannot be appreciated all at once. It takes time—it has to get into the system.'

'Nonsense. Take the thing seriously; consider what can be done with three thousand pounds. It is quite enough, with prudence, to keep you while you are qualifying for a profession and start you afterwards: law, medicine, the church—which will you have? Or you might start a horse or cattle farm—there is an opening they tell me, and the rent of land in some places is very low. Or you might buy a partnership in a house of business—three thousand pounds would go a long way in many houses. There are a hundred ways in which

a prudent man might invest that sum of money. I assure you, Sir George, that there are thousands of young fellows, as well educated as yourself, who, if they had three thousand pounds to begin with, would feel that all the wealth of Lombard Street was well within their reach. And they'd manage to get a good slice of it, too.'

'Very likely. I don't feel that way at all myself. I am quite certain that whatever I did, I should get none of the wealth of Lombard Street.'

'Well—well, but permit me, you haven't yet got the true feeling of your poverty. You don't quite understand yet what money means—the difference it makes. Money, my friend, is the only thing—the only thing—that makes life tolerable. Without it there can be no happiness, no independence, no authority, no self-respect. Get money somehow.' The old man spoke with sincerity and conviction. Of course he was quite right.

'Well, I said, 'I will think it over. At this moment you cannot expect me to have any coherent ideas on the subject. I really do think, however, that there is no one in the world less able to make money than myself.'

'Wait—be patient—and consider what things mean. Heavens! If we could only make young men understand.'

'Yes.' I took up my hat. 'If you have really done your worst'—

'Don't go just yet, Sir George. I have one or two things still to say.' The solicitor, whose face generally had more of keenness than of benevolence in it, leaned back and assumed an unwonted expression, with more benevolence in it than keenness. 'Let us return to what you might do: you are young, you are well-bred, you are good-looking, you have pleasant manners, you are'—

He lifted his eyebrows into a note of interrogation.

'Clever?' I replied. 'No. Nor bookish. Nor scientific. Nor inclined to any of the professions. And ignorant to the last degree.'

'Dear! Dear! What a thousand pities this misfortune did not happen twenty years ago! Then you would have been trained to something. Whereas now'— He considered a little. 'Let us think of a few other things. Journalism?'

'I told you, I am not clever.'

'Pity. Journalism requires no capital and no training. I would not recommend the stage.'

'I cannot act.'

'There is one thing we have forgotten, Sir George. You are a young man of good family; you have, therefore, family influence. You must set that to work for you. People think that everything nowadays goes by competitive examination. Ho! ho! The world is kept in the dark entirely for the sake of young men like you. There are quantities of lucky people—commissioners, secretaries, people about the Court, people everywhere—who get in by family influence, and get on by family influence. There are colonial appointments, some of them very good indeed, if you don't mind going

abroad. Or you might begin as a private secretary to a rising man. Why, there was a private secretary once who became a peer. The best thing you can do is to go to your own people.'

'Unfortunately, it is no use. I haven't got any people. My mother was the daughter of a simple country clergyman. The judge's father was a West End builder—originally an East End boat-builder. I remember that because there is a romance in the family about an old sailor and a bag of diamonds.'

'But you do possess your title. And believe me, Sir George, if you are careful you may find that it is a very valuable possession indeed. By means of your title you may once more join the wealthy classes. Thousands of women, rich women, daughters of wealthy men, would give anything for a title. Find out where these women are—in York, in Bath, in Birmingham, in Liverpool, in Manchester, here in London. Get introductions, and you will find your path smoother for you.'

'Marry money?' I shuddered.

'Do not misunderstand me. You are not expected to marry an old woman or an ugly woman. There are as many nice girls and pretty girls who have money as there are old women. Marry money, young man. Marry money. It is the easiest thing in the world for you to do. And I am quite sure, quite the most pleasant. As for love, it is all imagination. And, besides, why shouldn't you love a rich girl as well as a poor girl?'

'No. Not to be thought of.'

'Well, if you won't marry money, there is the city. A baronet's name looks well on a board of directors. You would find it quite easy to get put on the Direction somewhere or other. The qualification is not a great deal. What do you think of that?'

'Why, as I know nothing whatever of business, it would be a kind of fraud on the shareholders.'

'Sir George, I fear I cannot help you. There are only a certain number of ways of making money. Choose. If you will have none of them, then we come back to the easiest way—marry money—and if you refuse that—he spread his hands, meaning, 'then you must starve.'

I walked away thoughtfully. It was with a very heavy heart that I mounted to my chambers—Plantagenet Mansions, eighth floor, about half-way up.

'Marry money, marry money,' said the solicitor. The words kept ringing in my ears like the tolling of a bell.

For, you see, in order to marry money I had no occasion to go to New York, or to Bath, or Manchester, or Birmingham. The money was actually waiting for me with the marriage. I had only to reach out my hand and take it, and with the money the owner of it. And not an old woman at all; nor an ugly woman; nor a woman maimed or halt in mind or in body; a woman, eminently desirable, beautiful, wealthy, well born, and of sweet disposition.

'Marry money, marry money,' said the man of large experience and of many years.

I turned mechanically into the room called

my study. It was really my workroom. It was fitted with a lathe and with a bench. On the wall were hundreds of tools, bright and glittering. There was a shelf of books, technical books about carpentering, wood-carving, cabinet-making, fretwork, ironwork, and the like; there were 'blocks' ready for use; there were boxes and other things finished and unfinished, chased, rounded, polished. The lathe represented my one talent.

I looked at the machine thoughtfully. 'If I could only make money out of you. And now, I am very much afraid I shall have to sell you for what you will fetch—tools and block and all. Pity! Pity!' I laid a loving hand upon the bright and delicate machinery. I wish it had sighed, or groaned, or done anything by way of sympathetic response. But it did not. Even in romance machinery is not responsive.

'Marry money,' whispered the voice.

I saw letters lying on the table, and tore open the first, the one whose handwriting I knew. It was a woman's. 'Dear George,' I read. 'I was anxious to learn the result of your talk with the lawyers and what you have really lost. Come and see me as soon as you get back. Yours, Frances.'

'Marry money, marry money,' said the solicitor.

I opened a drawer and took out a dainty case of red velvet bound with gold. It contained a single photograph. It was the portrait of a girl, and showed a very striking face, the face of a queen or a princess; her name was surely Imperia; certainly a *grande dame de par le monde*—a most regal face, the brow and cheek ample, the eyes large and steady, the features clear and regular, the lips firm, the chin rounded. Everything about this woman large, including her mind; a woman whom the common herd would fear, though they might reverence her. It would require either a brave man or a presumptuous man to make love to her.

'There is no woman like Frances,' I thought. 'And yet'—

When one has been brought up from childhood side by side with a girl, seeing her every day, a girl a little older than one's self, and a great deal cleverer, the affection which one feels for that girl partakes of the brotherly emotion. Therefore I said, 'and yet'—

'Marry money, marry money,' this importunate solicitor continued.

I put on my hat and went to call upon Frances.

Lady Frances, daughter of the famous Earl of Clovelly, once, twice, three times Premier, and of the even more illustrious Countess, the last of our great political ladies, was also the young widow of that distinguished statesman, old Sir Chantrey Bohun, who died in harness as Secretary of State for India. She was a year older than myself, a difference which, when we were children together, and next door country neighbours, gave her a certain superiority over me. She married, for political reasons, at the age of eighteen; it was generally understood, when her husband died, that, after a decent interval of two or three years, she would marry a second time, and play over

again the rôle so admirably enacted by her mother.

She was sitting beside the window, into which poured a flood of vaporous sunshine from the west, for it was a day in early April when the sun sets about seven. The warm, soft light wrapped her as in a cloud, under which her face was soft and luminous. Truly, a most lovely woman, but to me not a woman who inspired love. These brotherly affections sometimes interfere with things that might have been.

'Sit down, George,' she said, kindly, 'and tell me exactly all about it.'

I told her in a few words.

'Oh George, nothing left? Why, it is impossible!'

'Unfortunately it is quite possible. I am a pauper, Frances, except for a few scraps and crumbs.'

'My poor George.' Frances held out both her hands. 'I am so sorry, very sorry. But people like us don't become absolute paupers. There is always a something left after the most terrible catastrophe. You spoke of scraps and crumbs?'

'The fragments that remain amount to about three thousand pounds, I understand. An income of ninety pounds a year. That is what I meant by the scraps and crumbs.'

'It does not seem much, does it? But then money is the most elastic thing in the world. My sovereigns are all sixpences. I know some people whose sixpences are all sovereigns. Of course you have not begun to make any plans for the future?'

'Not yet. You see it is only an hour or two since the truth was sprung upon me. I am trying to think it over. I shall sell my horses and furniture to begin with. I shall then move into a garret somewhere. Once in my garret, I shall begin to think away like another Darwin!'

'Sit down, George, in my chair.' It was the lowest, longest, and most luxurious chair in the room. Sitting or lying in it, one looked completely under the control of any one standing over the chair. Frances got up to make room for me. 'So, obedient boy. Now, let me talk.'

'I listen, Frances. I still have ears.'

'The first duty of poverty—call it rather responsibility—the lower kind call it the privilege of poverty—is to accept the—the sympathy and friendly advice—and'—

'The sympathy and the advice, Frances, by all means.'

She became very grave. 'George, we have known each other so long that I can talk to you freely and openly. How long have we been friends?'

'About twenty-two years. Ever since we were able to run about.'

'That is a long time, is it not? And always friends?'

'Always friends. Always the best of friends.'

'And we have always talked to each other freely, have we not?'

'Quite freely and openly. You have been the greatest happiness of my life, Frances.'

'And you of mine. So that we owe each

other a quantity of things—gratitude, friendship, even—even, if necessary, a little sacrifice of—not principle or self-respect—say, of pride.'

I knew very well what was coming. Anybody might have guessed.

'The greatest happiness of poverty—that which ought to make it the most coveted of all possessions—is that it constantly commands proof of the affection and interest felt towards one. That is a great thing, is it not?'

'Nay. Even when I was disgustingly rich I never doubted your interest.'

'The next thing about poverty is that it must make men work, and may develop all that is best in them. Some men never find themselves—their own power—their lives are ruined—because they are never forced to work. That has been, so far, your case.'

'No, Frances. I should have done no good if I had worked like the busy bee.'

'All my life, George, much as I regard you, I have been thinking how much better you might have been. Oh! I don't mind confessing. You have never done any work at all. You went to school and you idled away your time there; you went to Cambridge, and, of course, you idled away your time there. There has been no necessity. You have never worked because you must. Oh! I wonder that rich men ever achieve anything, seeing that no one teaches them the duty of work. I wish I had a school of rich boys. I would make them work harder than the poor boys. They should learn to work because they ought.'

'I am not clever, Frances. Work of the kind you mean is impossible for me. I was designed by nature for nothing better than a cabinet-maker. I believe I shall turn cabinet-maker, and so develop my higher nature and make you proud of me at last.'

'All the time, George, I have been growing up side by side with him—the incomplete or undeveloped George—the complete George, a nobler creature; working when you remain idle; filled with ambition while you are content with obscurity. He is such a splendid man, George—and so like you, only better looking.'

'That may very well be. If I were to find myself as you call it, I should find a very dull and plodding fellow, not half so pleasant as the incomplete other—the undeveloped fellow who had not found himself.'

'Not dull at all. You have never done even common justice to yourself. Few men have such good natural abilities as yourself.'

'Well, Frances, if it please you, and if it goes no farther—for this is not a thing to be bruited abroad—I will accept all the attributes of genius.'

'Then we come back to the question, what will you do with your poverty?'

'And again I reply, that I cannot yet for the life of me imagine. My lawyer has been advising me to go into the city as a Guinea Pig—that is, to lend my name to bogus companies at a guinea a sitting. It seems that if a man with a title will sell his name, people can be swindled with much greater ease. That does not look a promising line, does it?'

Frances shuddered. 'George, you are a gentleman.'

'Or I might use my small capital to qualify for a profession—there is my grandfather's line; but even allowing for those great abilities, with which you credit me, I really could not read law.'

'Anything else?'

'Oh yes. Some men, it appears, buy a partnership in the city; some become stock-brokers.'

'I don't think that would suit you.'

'And some go out to California fruit farming. And that, Frances, seems the most hopeful line so far.'

'Is that all that you can think of? Very well. Now let me suggest something for you. A much better line than any of these. You know what has always been my hope for you?'

'I know that you have sometimes dreamed of the impossible.'

'Yes—and—how—now that you will have no other distractions, now that you can begin and keep before you the goal—now, George, is the time for you to realise this dream of mine. Make yourself a career in politics.'

'My dear Frances, I could more easily make myself a career in mathematics.'

'Nonsense. You have the capacity; you want nothing but the will—the ambition. George, cannot I make you ambitious? Think—ask yourself—can there be anything nobler, more worthy of ambition, than to guide the destinies of a nation?—to make the history that will have to be written?'

'Put in that way it certainly sounds very well.'

'I have thought it all out. The thing is perfectly easy—for a man like yourself. You must belong to a party—our party: they will find you a borough; you will contest that borough; you will win. Once in the House you will work your way and command the recognition of your party, and so, by steps, find a place in the Cabinet. Why, my dear George, it is the experience of every day.'

I got out of the low and luxurious chair with some difficulty. One cannot be serious lying on one's back. And now I felt very serious. 'You see your statesman at the end of his career. You do not understand how he has worked his way upwards, by what a tortuous path he has climbed. Moreover, you only see the greatest man, the leader. Now, my child, the kind of statesman I think of is the ordinary person who becomes towards the end of his career a Cabinet Minister. That person does not strike me as a noble character at all; think of the coat he has had to turn; think of the tricks he has had to practise; all to get votes—all to get votes.'

'You exaggerate, George.'

'No, I do not. However, it matters nothing what I think. The House is quite out of the question. I cannot afford it.'

She blushed crimson, she dropped her eyes, she trembled. 'George,' she said, with hesitation and embarrassment, 'again, do not be proud. It is the privilege of friendship; it is your privilege to let me find that—the means—you must accept of me.'

This was the great temptation. All that I

had to do at that moment—I knew it would come—I was waiting for it—I was prepared for it. All that was wanted was for me to talk. Of course I could not take the money she was offering. All that was wanted was to speak vaguely about ambition, to fall in with her hopes and dreams—one can always accept a dream or offer a dream—and the woman and her fortune and everything would be mine. Because I knew very well—a thousand indications had told me—that she loved that nobler and more complete George of her imagination—not myself at all. I had only to pretend to be that nobler person, as full of ambition, as resolute for distinction. As for being in love, why, if you are always from childhood in the company of a girl, the passion called love, if it is awakened at all, is weak and puny compared with that towards the mystery of the unknown and the strange. Still, there was the beautiful woman, my old friend, who only wanted to believe that I was strong and ambitious, and I only had to pretend. It was like the temptation of the Christian martyr—only a little pinch of incense—just one—and life and freedom, the enjoyment of the sunshine were granted to me.

I took her hand and raised it to my lips. 'Twas the refusal of the Christian martyr. 'Not that way, Frances,' I said. 'Any way but that. I am going out of the world—up or down, I know not which. But, up or down, it cannot be by any such help as that.'

THE FILTRATION OF WATER.

THE NEW THEORY.

IN No. 917 of this *Journal*, published on July 23, 1881, an article appeared on 'The Artificial Filtration of Water.' It embodied a general statement of all that was known on the subject at that time, and it may be useful to give a very brief outline of what that knowledge amounted to.

There were, it was explained, two theories respecting the manner in which water, by passing through a bed of gravel or other well-known filtering materials, became purified from any foreign particles of matter contained in it. It was quite obvious that in part, at least, the water would be purified by the mere mechanical straining of the filter-bed, and there were respectable authorities who maintained that this mechanical straining was really all that the filtering material effected. In opposition to this theory, however, it was shown that if a known quantity of impurity were mingled with water and passed through an efficient filter, the amount of it that would afterwards be found in the filtering material would be materially less than that which had been put in. A considerable portion of it would be found actually to have disappeared.

It therefore came to be very generally believed that, in addition to the merely mechanical process of straining, there was a chemical process, the effect of which was to oxidise impurity. Every particle of sand or other material constituting the bed was, it was explained, surrounded by a thin film of air clinging

to it, and it was coming into contact with this air—and of course with the concentrated oxygen contained in the air—that the chemical destruction was brought about. The two processes taken together—the mechanical straining and the chemical oxidation—at the time of the publication of the article referred to, were supposed to constitute the whole philosophy of the purification of water by filtration.

This summing up of the matter, however, was not altogether free from difficulty. If that had been the whole of it, it is pretty obvious that, all other things being equal, the cleaner the filter-bed, the more thorough and efficient would have been the filtration. But as a matter of fact, the great water companies of London found that this was not the case, and that with a perfectly new bed of bright fresh sand and gravel they could not satisfactorily purify their water, while with beds that looked to be in so polluted a condition as to call forth the remonstrances of the Local Government Board experts, they could filter splendidly. Nobody could pretend to explain the curious paradox of a dirty filter-bed purifying water more thoroughly than a clean one; but there was the fact, and at least one of the eight London companies persisted in refusing to heed the remonstrances of the Government officials, and declined to renew their beds as desired.

Meanwhile, bacteriological science was slowly coming along with an explanation that seems now to be generally accepted as indisputable, and which seems likely to exert a very important influence indeed on matters of water-supply. It makes it quite clear why the clean sand could not and did not rid of all pollution the impure water passed through it, while the work of the dirty filter-beds proved most efficient and satisfactory.

Most people know something of the new microscopic world that has been unveiled to our gaze by the labours of the late M. Pasteur, Dr Koch, and others, and of the important part played in all matters of life, health, and disease, by microbes; and a few years ago it was suggested that the solution of the curious riddle presented in the phenomena of filtration might possibly be found in a biological direction. So extremely improbable did this appear to all but the very few who had been giving special attention to the subject, that when in January 1887, Mr. W. J. Dibdin, F.C.S., chemist to the London County Council, in a paper read before the Institute of Civil Engineers, suggested it, the suggestion was received with incredulous laughter. Mr Dibdin was obliged to admit that at that time 'knowledge on the subject is not yet sufficiently advanced to put the new theory to practical application, but he had been patiently following the researches of M. Pasteur, and had been working with Dr Dupré, with the purpose of determining the best mode of purifying the effluent water from the great London sewage-works, before discharging it into the river Thames, and he had already arrived at a very definite opinion on the matter.' 'I have not the slightest doubt,' he told the incredulous civil engineers, 'that the future treatment of sewage will be a combined chemical and biological one.' 'The

lesson to be learned from the numerous experiments published by various authorities, both in this country and on the continent,' said Mr Dibdin, 'is that bacteria and other low forms of organic life are most potent in the destruction of all objectionable refuse. Modern experience shows that, when this subject is better understood and thoroughly worked out, in all probability the true way of purifying sewage will be first to separate the sludge, and then to turn into the neutral effluent a charge of the proper organisms, whatever that may be, specially cultivated for the purpose.'

That paper was read before the civil engineers at the beginning of 1887, and shortly after, the state authorities of Massachusetts commenced an exhaustive series of laboratory experiments and investigations with the view of testing these new ideas. The biological theory of filtration was fully established by them, and it only remained to determine whether that which had been demonstrated to be practicable in the laboratory could be made serviceable on a great scale such as the sewage-works of London presented. In order practically to settle this, the main drainage committee of the London County Council, in November 1892, ordered the construction of an experimental filter-bed of an acre in extent, previous experiments having determined that for their particular purpose the best material for the bed was coke breeze—powdered coke, that is—three feet in depth, with three inches of gravel on the top, just to keep it down.

Anything like a detailed account of the experiments carried out with this acre filter-bed cannot of course be given here, but the general conclusions arrived at may be briefly stated. It should be understood that it was not the sewage of London that was dealt with, but the foul effluent water from which the 'sludge' had been separated by mechanical settlement, assisted by chemical precipitation.

The first general conclusion arrived at was that the action of a filter is twofold: First, it separates mechanically all gross particles of suspended matter; secondly, it effects the oxidation of organic matters through the agency of living organisms. It will be seen that the theory of filtration set forth in our earlier article is shown, by the light of the latest science, to have been quite correct up to a certain point. That is to say, it was quite right in assuming that filtration was a process both mechanical and chemical—it strained part of the impurity from water, and it oxidised the rest. The new phase of the matter, and that which scientists did not understand when that article was written in 1881, is that the oxidation is affected by means of animalculæ. When water is heavily polluted with animal and vegetable matter, and the supply of free oxygen is insufficient, then animal life comes into action. If the impurity is very dense, and the quantity of oxygen very small, there are putrefactive organisms—organisms capable of living and thriving without air—that commence the work of clearance by breaking down the highly organised animal and vegetable matter into simpler forms. They thus prepare the food necessary for microbes

that can only live and thrive if they get an abundant supply of air, and it now appears to be established beyond question that our great secret of successfully filtering water heavily polluted with organic matter is to afford these purifying microbes just the conditions they require.

The aeration of water, by swirling along in swift streams or by tumbling over cascades, which formerly was supposed to eliminate impurity by the direct action of oxygen, is now proved to effect this result only indirectly, by affording an ample supply of oxygen to the microbes which are the real agents in the business.

As it has been shown, Dr Dupré, Mr Dibdin, and a few others who had been devoting special attention to the subject had some insight into this matter in 1887. But there was one point which at that time they did not fully apprehend. They quite expected that further experiment would show beyond all doubt that living things were concerned in the purification of water by filtration, but they do not seem to have apprehended the fact, that wherever there is impurity to be eliminated by filtration, that impurity itself contains the living organisms necessary for the process, and that what is required to be done is, not to provide and cultivate these infusoria, but to recognise the fact that they are freely present in impure water, and to afford them the conditions they require for healthy existence. This has been abundantly proved by Mr Dibdin's long and careful experiments at the northern outfall of the London main drainage system.

He has found that by taking a new filter of coke breeze and pouring into it the affluent water from the sewage in very gradually increased volume, he gradually increases the filtering power of his bed. At first, the purifying microbes in the bed are limited in number. But with an abundant, though not an excessive, supply of food they multiply amazingly—like the growth of yeast. As they become stronger in force, the supply of sewage impurity may be increased, and this may go on until the bed has attained its full 'biological efficiency,' that is to say, until the filter-bed has become one whole mass of teeming life, greedily devouring the organic matter poured in upon it. The great point in the successful management of a filter-bed seems to be skilfully to adjust the work to be done, to the voracity of the microbes in it. If the impurity which they are expected to dispose of seriously exceeds their powers, arrears accumulate until they get fairly choked and die for want of air. It seems to be an established fact that if these infusoria are to be kept in good appetite, each influx of sewage-water must be followed by a period of rest and fresh air. The filter must be emptied by drawing off its contents from below. This sucks the air down into the filtering material and restores the energies of the microbes. At the end of an hour or so the bed may be filled again, but it has been found expedient to give a rest and aeration of about four-and-twenty hours every seven or eight days. Mr Dibdin has thus by experiments on a large scale arrived at con-

clusions which in the main are those that the authorities of Massachusetts had reached by their laboratory experiments, and which, as has been shown, he forecasted nearly ten years ago. He explicitly affirms that the life of a coke breeze filter worked in the manner described is practically without a limit, and that the purification of water may be carried to any degree of perfection that may be desired.

AFTER THE FACT.*

CHAPTER III.

I CANNOT pretend to describe my feelings of the next few hours; nor would the result be very edifying even if I succeeded in any such attempt. I trembled for the criminal's security, I quaked for the sergeant's life, but most of all I quaked and trembled for my own skin and my own peace of mind. If the sergeant captured Deedes, my flagrant complicity must inevitably leak out, and I too should have to stand my trial as accessory after the fact. If, on the other hand, Deedes murdered the sergeant, and himself escaped, the guilt of blood would lie upon my soul for ever more. Thus I tossed between a material Scylla and a spiritual Charybdis, in the trough of my ignoble terrors. Every footstep in the gravel was that of some 'stern-faced man' come to lead me hence 'with gyves upon my wrists.' Every cry from the street proclaimed the sergeant's murder in the empty house.

It was impossible to conceal my condition from my friends. With that partial and misleading candour, therefore, at which I was becoming so vile an adept, I told them of my recognition of the man whose name was now in every mouth; of our midnight conversation in my room; of the police-whistle, and my subsequent adventures in the constables' company. There I stopped; and the tale gained me a kudos, and exposed me to a fusilade of questions, which were by no means the lightest punishments of that terrible day. Again and again I felt convinced I had betrayed the guilty knowledge that lay so heavy on my heart; and never more so than about eleven in the forenoon, when my host came among us perspiring from a walk.

'I've just been down to the police-station,' said he, 'but they haven't got him yet. The sergeant tells me.'—

'Which sergeant?' I shouted.

'The man you were with last night. He has been speaking about you, Mr Bower—speaking very highly of your behaviour last night. Nor was he the only one; it's all over the town.—Girls, we have all woke up famous for having such a hero in our house!'

Famous! a hero! I thought of the antonyms which might justly replace those words any moment. And in a sudden, irresistible panic I fled the room; my flight being attributed (I

afterwards discovered) to my 'charming English modesty, so wanting in young Australia.'

Meantime the young ladies of the house had been regaling me with a good many facts, and perhaps a little unintentional fiction, concerning the Geelong branch of Mr Deedes's colonial career. It was a record highly characteristic of the Deedes who had been so popular and so infamous at school. He had won every tournament at the tennis-courts; he danced better than any man in Geelong. He had proposed to a rich Melbourne widow, twice his age; had broken many hearts, including that of the blue-eyed daughter of the bank; and been seen at one dance, 'well, in a state which made it impossible for us to know him any more.' I had gathered from Deedes that my friends were none of his; now I was in possession of the cause; but the item affecting the Miss P'Anson whose face I had just seen the day before, and yet remembered vividly, was the item which focused my interest. I asked what sort of a girl she was. The account I received was not a little critical, yet reasonably charitable save on the part of one young lady who said nothing at all. She it was also who had said least against Deedes himself; and of this one I thought, when I had broken loose from the bery and won to the farthest and most obscure corner of the kitchen-garden. Was she also in love with the attractive scamp? Could that Miss P'Anson with the eyes be in the same helpless case? Deedes had hinted at the manager's well-grounded goodwill towards himself. Could there be, not a secret but a private understanding between those two? He had given me a letter and spoken of enclosures, which I had undertaken to deliver. Could one of them contain words of love for those sweet-looking blue eyes? And if so, was I bound to keep my promise?

The letter itself I had quite forgotten in the stress of a later anxiety now happily removed. But I opened and read it among the gooseberries and the cabbages; and was myself so revolted, alike by the purport and the tone of this communication, that I have no intention of reproducing it here. It had, however, the merit of brevity; and this was the point. He had been an idiot about girls all his life. There were two at least in Geelong of whom he wished, whatever happened to him, to take a tender leave. He had written two notes, but left them undirected, because it was not fair that I should know their names. Would I put the three-cornered note on the ledge under the eaves, at the back of the pavilion at the tennis-courts, and midway between the ladies' and the gentlemen's entrances? I should probably be going there that afternoon (as a matter of fact I *was* going), and it would take no trouble, but only a little care, to do this when nobody was near. But he would be immensely grateful to me; and still more so if I would slip the square note into any of the books in a certain pew of the church nearest the Western Beach. He gave the number of the pew, and the exact bearings of the church, which was always open.

I pass over the thing that offended me: his taking it so coolly for granted, before it *was* granted, that I would help him in his abomin-

able dilemma, and so connive in his felony. I had done so; but had I read this letter in his presence, I flattered myself I had shown him a stiffer back. As it was, however, these undirected *billets-doux* did undoubtedly recruit and renew my interest in the whole intrigue; and, promise or no promise, I should have carried out my villain's instructions to the letter. He had counted upon the inquisitive side of my character—shall I say of human nature?—and he had counted not in vain. It was a stroke of genius on his part to leave the notes undressed.

I looked at my watch. We were still on the right side of noon. Going indoors for my hat, I craved permission to run to my rooms and change into flannels before lunch; and I could not have hit upon a craftier pretext. It exempted me from escort, and thus cleared my path to the church, whither I proceeded without delay. The pew was easily found; I profaned a prayer-book with the square note, and crept out like the stealthy creature I was become. The church had been empty when I entered it. Coming out, however, I met a man in the porch. He was a huge, sandy-bearded, rolling walker, wearing a suit of blue serge and a straw-hat. As we passed, I saw his eye upon me; a moment later, this caused me to return upon my tracks, in order to see he did not meddle with Deedes's note. I was too late; I caught him sidling awkwardly from the pew, with the little square missive held quite openly between his fingers; and I awaited him in the porch with sensations upon which I should not care to dwell, beyond confessing that he appeared to me to grow six inches with every rolling stride.

'Pardon me, sir,' said I, 'but you've taken something that wasn't intended for you.'

'How do you know that?' said he.

'It was intended for a young lady!'

The big man looked down upon me through narrow eyes.

'Exactly,' said he. 'I am her father.'

And that was all; he passed in front of me without a threatening or an insolent word, whistling softly to himself as he slouched down the churchyard path. But I, as I followed, took offence from every cubit of his stature; and could have driven a knife into his broad blue back, with the villainous deliberation of Deedes himself.

Heaven knows how I behaved at lunch; instead of Deedes and the sergeant, the big man in the church was on my nerves. What would he do? Read the letter, of course; yet he had not opened it, to my knowledge, when I lost sight of him. Would he know whom the letter was from? If so (and know he must), my illicit dealings with the wanted man would be equally plain to him; and how would this stranger deal with me? Who was he, and did he know in the least who I was, or where to lay hands on me? Should I meet him at the courts? I began to tell myself I did not care either way; that it must all come to light sooner or later now, and therefore the sooner the better. But the man never came to the courts. As the afternoon wore on without sight or sign of him, a little confidence returned.

The evening was at hand, with my atonement as well as that of Deedes; and there was comfort in the thought that at the worst my false position would come to an end within the same twenty-four hours which had witnessed its assumption.

But the interim was itself charged with dramatic interests for me personally. In the first place there was the three-cornered note. Impelled by that strongest of all motives, curiosity, and thus undeterred by the fiasco of the first note, I put the second where I had been told to put it before I had been five minutes on the ground. Then I played a couple of setts, but my play was even worse than usual; for I had one eye all the time upon the gate, and it would follow each new arrival to the pavilion, and seek a blush on each fair face as it emerged. I saw nothing then to arouse my suspicions; but when, in less than an hour, I went myself for my coat, the three-cornered note was gone.

Suspicious as I was, and, for that day at least, every inch of me a spy, I could fasten my suspicion upon no one person. Every girl on the ground, so far as I could hear, was talking of Deedes with the shocked fascination of inquisitive innocence: it might have been any one of them. All looked at me as though they knew me for the red-handed accomplice that I was; and those to whom I was introduced tortured me unremittingly with their questions. Never I am sure was a man more visibly embarrassed; yet who upon that ground could plumb the actual depth of my discomfort? Only one young lady refrained from adding to it, and this was Miss Ethel P'Anson herself. The name of Deedes never passed between us. I fancied her relief as great as mine.

We were together some time, strolling about the ground, picking up balls, and sitting on seats we had occasionally to ourselves. Miss Ethel's eyes appealed to me more than ever. They were dreadfully sad, but there was cause enough for that. I only hoped—I only hoped the three-cornered note was not in her pocket. Yet she had arrived early, and changed her shoes, and never played one sett.

My part in our conversation was chiefly wilful nonsense. I had conceived a laudable ambition to make those blue eyes smile. I am ashamed to add that I rattled on until I had them full of tears. Even then I did not adopt the usual, I believe the well-bred course of ignoring what was no business of mine.

'You are in trouble,' said I bluntly. 'How is it at the bank?'

'My father has been summoned to Melbourne by the directors,' she answered in a low voice. 'My mother—'

'Your mother?' I repeated presently.

'Is ill in bed,' she sobbed. 'Oh, Mr Bower, it is a dreadful, dreadful trouble! You will wonder why I am here. I am here for the best. Think that, and nothing more.'

But I was not thinking of that at all; a dumb, blind rage had risen within me against the maker of all this grief; and if beforehand I was set upon my compact with Deedes, the tears of this sweet girl were the seal and signature of my determination. Their money

for his freedom; entire restitution for my risk. On any other terms I would not only be no friend to him, but his bitter foe.

Thinking of little else meanwhile, and pleading my sleepless night as an excuse alike for continued silence and an early retreat to my lodging, I found him, shortly after nine o'clock, crouched in the cellar of the empty house, and evidently much altered by his long day in hiding. He said it had seemed like a week; and the few minutes, during which some fellow had been poking about the place, like a day. I told him that was the sergeant. The men had not been yet to mend the window. Deedes wished they had. Any risk, he said, would have been better than the interminable waiting and the ceaseless listening. But for one little friend he had found, he would have made a dash for it and chanced everything. And in the light of the candle I had brought with me, he showed me a brown mouse seated on the collar of his coat; but when I pushed the candle closer, the mouse fled with a scuttle and a squeak.

'Ah, you've frightened him,' said Deedes; 'however, he's done his part. It killed the afternoon, taming him; have you ever tamed anything, Beetle? I have, every kind of animal, including women; but, by Heaven, I never expected to see myself as tame as I am to-night! I'm unmanned. The thing was beyond me; my reach exceeded my grasp, as Browning says. I'm rusted with a vile repose. You could lift me out by the hair and give me to the nearest bobby!'

'Come,' I said, 'there's no need for that. Only show me where the money is, and do as you've resolved to do, and it won't be such a very bad business after all. I suppose you haven't weakened on what we said this morning?'

He laughed bitterly; it was his deep dejection that had turned away my wrath. 'Good heavens, no!' he cried, getting stiffly to his feet. 'Have you? Did you put those notes where I told you to? Did you get the whiskers?'

'I have done both,' said I, seeing no point in mentioning the contretemps in the church. 'Here are the whiskers; I bought them at a hairdresser's—for theatricals. And here's a clean duck suit and a helmet that I used to wear at sea. Don't look askance at them. I know they're conspicuous. For that very reason, they're going to nip suspicion in the bud!'

Deedes considered a moment, and then gave the most genuine laugh I had heard from him yet.

'By Jove, they're the very thing!' he cried, in a soft enthusiasm. 'Beetle, you're a brick!'

Five minutes later he rustled and radiated from his head to his ankles in snowy whites; blonde whiskers wept from either cheek; then with his penknife he hacked at his moustache until his mouth showed through and spoilt him; and with that we were ready to start. Our rendezvous was Western Beach; our only difficulty, an unseen exit from the house. We had luck, however, on our side. Not only did we break covert unobserved, but we met with

no undue scrutiny in the open; not a single constable saw or was seen of us; and we gained the beach, deeply grateful to our proper stars.

'Now,' said Deedes, 'you follow me along this pier.'

'Why?' said I, with ugly visions; and instinctively I stood in my tracks.

'Why? You see that topsail schooner away along on the left? Well, I haven't told you before, but that's where the swag is—aboard the schooner *Mollyhawk*—waiting for me.'

'I'm not coming,' said I stoutly. 'You're a desperate man, Deedes. I know you; none of your hanky-panky with me. You go and fetch it. I stay where I am.'

'But, my good fellow, it's too heavy for one to carry. There's hundreds and hundreds in gold!'

'Then bring your accomplice. I'm not frightened of you!' said I fiercely. 'I see a man within a hundred yards; he's coming this way; I shall have him by to see fair-play.'

'Oh, call him then!' cried Deedes, with an oath. 'No,' he added with another; 'I'll do it for you. Not to trust a fellow in a mess like this!'

It was a very low cry that he uttered, but the man came up in a moment. I was surprised that he had heard it at all. He proved to be a huge, sailorly creature, with a rolling gait. But not until he was up with us, and shaking hands with Deedes, did I recognise my burly antagonist of the church hard at hand.

'Help! help!' I cried, with sudden insight.

'My dear old chap, what nonsense!' said Deedes, throwing an arm round my neck. Something was pressed across my mouth—something moist and cool like a dog's nose—and held there while sense and strength ebbed out together. Then the masts and spars of ships flew to the stars in a soundless explosion; and I knew no more.

THE OLDEST TRADE IN THE WORLD.

Ask a friend to name the oldest trade in the world, and it is almost certain that 'Gardening' will be the reply, prompted, no doubt, by a reminiscence of the Biblical story of the Garden of Eden. It will need little reflection, however, to make plain the fact that Adam could not, without tools, dress and keep the garden in which he is said to have been placed, and, therefore, the culture of the vegetable products of the soil must have been preceded by the manufacture of implements. These, in their rudest form, were flints broken by blows of other stones until a sharp edge was obtained; and thus we see it is not without warrant that the flint-knappers, who still linger among us, claim for their industry the distinction of possessing the greatest antiquity. The variety of implements with which the men who lived in the 'stone ages' furnished themselves is as surprising in its extent as is the high degree of perfection to which the flints were brought. They had at their command hatchets, adzes, chisels, gouges, scrapers, battle-axes, lances, spear-heads, arrow-heads, hammers,

mauls, and many other implements of war and of peace, of the use of which we have, for the most part, but a vague idea.

From the earliest ages flint has been used as an agent in the production of fire, at first by percussion with iron pyrites, and subsequently with a piece of steel. The application of this principle to firearms raised flint-knapping, once again, to a position of high importance, and caused it to flourish in a manner foreign to it since the long-past days when metal implements began to be obtainable. This revived prosperity continued until what we may yet call the modern inventions of lucifer matches and percussion caps ousted the tinder-box and the old flint-lock from the haunts of civilisation.

But besides its fitness for the weapons and tools of primitive man, there is another very obvious use to which flint could be applied. It is an excellent building-stone, and as such it has been used, from time immemorial, wherever it has abounded. One of the most striking features of the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, for instance, is the extent to which flint has been employed in the erection of buildings of every description. Sometimes the nodules have been used without any preparation, but very frequently the flints have been more or less dressed before passing into the hands of the builder. The most highly wrought have a perfectly square face and tapering sides. When these are skilfully laid, it is almost impossible to insert even the point of a pen-knife between the outer edges of adjacent stones, and the work is practically indestructible. Some of the most beautiful specimens are to be seen at Norwich, in the tower of Cromer Church, and on the front of the Guildhall at Lynn. Modern work of this description is far inferior to that of olden times, and is but rarely undertaken, so that even this branch of the most ancient industry has now very little vitality.

The chief seat of flint-knapping in England is, and probably ever has been, the village of Brandon, about eighty-eight miles north of London, and on the boundary between Norfolk and Suffolk. As Aberdeen is 'the Granite City,' so Brandon may be called 'the Flint Village,' for except in its main street, where several of the houses have brick fronts, there is scarcely a building which is not composed of flints. As a rule, the stones are not squared or otherwise dressed, but are put in whole, or, if too large to be so used, are broken by a blow of a hammer. Bricks are used at the angles of such houses and round the windows. The cost of the flints in their native condition is merely nominal, and of those that have been roughly squared, a sufficient quantity to face a cottage can be bought for fifty shillings.

The flint beds are at a short distance from the village, and have been worked from the very earliest times. It is almost certain that both in the old and the new stone ages they supplied raw material for the chief implements then in use, and were, therefore, worked before the formation of the German Ocean, and when as yet Great Britain was a portion of the mainland. Some of the pits dug by Neolithic man were discovered by our Saxon forefathers

a thousand years ago, who, ignorant of the purpose of the excavations, called them Grime's Graves, a name which they still bear, and which is indicative of the inability of those early settlers to account for them. They exceed two hundred and fifty in number, and spread over some twenty acres now covered by a wood. They vary in size, the largest being forty feet across and twelve feet deep, and are mostly paved with stones, a feature which led to their being formerly regarded as underground dwellings.

No perfectly satisfactory explanation of the way in which flint originated has yet been given, but it is generally assumed that the siliceous matter was partly derived from the marine organisms of which traces are almost invariably present in the nodules, and that these organisms formed nuclei around which soluble silica accumulated. At Brandon the flint is found in three layers embedded in chalk which is met with about six feet below the surface of the soil. The stones from each layer have their own characteristics and bear distinctive names. Those first reached are called top-stones. They are of very irregular shape, are extremely knobby, and are the least valuable. The nodules in the middle bed are more regularly formed and are known as wall-stones. The best flints are obtained from the lowest bed and are called floor-stones. As a rule, they are flat masses from three to six inches in thickness, with evenly rounded sides. The layers are separated by chalk of varying thickness; and the lowest is found at a depth ranging from twenty-four to thirty-six feet.

Acres upon acres of the flint area are covered with the chalk and waste stone brought up from the countless pits that have been opened, shafts to reach the beds being sunk at a distance of fourteen or fifteen yards apart, and horizontal tunnels being driven in every possible direction through each layer. The heaps that have been formed of late years are staring white, while older accumulations have been wholly or partially clothed with herbage by kindly Nature.

A shaft is not an unbroken perpendicular opening, but the descent is made by a series of wide steps called stagings, about four and a half feet apart, and each at right angles to the one above. The soil and stones to be sent to the surface are thrown from staging to staging by the digger, a most laborious process. There may be a good reason for the non-employment of a windlass, or the wonted method may be simply due to the conservatism of the workers. The diggers do not co-operate, but each individual sinks his own shaft, excavates the tunnels, and raises the material. A fortnight is the time usually occupied in reaching the lowest bed, which is the first to be removed to permit of the soil taken from the upper beds being sent down the pit instead of up. It is customary to sink a shaft at the extremity of a tunnel formed from another pit, to secure the draught without which the digger's candle will not burn. The tunnels are just high enough to admit of a man using pick and shovel in them in a sitting position: and to add to the unpleasantness of working in such

a confined space, there is water continually dropping from the roof of the cavity and trickling down the sides. Springs, however, are never encountered, and accidents are extremely rare, the chalk being far too solid to fall. At intervals, pillars are left to support the superincumbent soil, and the practice of casting into one tunnel the refuse drawn from another still further tends to prevent the subsidence of the ground. Into the subterranean passages which he forms, the digger crawls on hands and knees, looking, as he enters, like nothing so much as a gigantic rabbit popping into its burrow.

And what is the pecuniary reward for toil of this severe and unpleasant description? If a man meets with good luck—in other words, if the flints in the bed on which he is at work are not separated by overmuch chalk, he can get out a one-horse-load of stone in two days, and so may earn a pound a week. Barely a living wage, to use the pet phrase of the day, especially as nothing saleable is brought to the surface during the ten or twelve days spent in sinking the shaft. And then, again, it sometimes happens that when a shaft has been sunk in the hope of continuing the working of what has proved to be a particularly good spot, the layer 'gives out' after a few flints have been extracted from the new tunnel, and the labour of days has gone for nothing. But striking the richest portions of a bed will not put money into the pocket of the finder unless there is a demand for their produce, and that is by no means constant. During the year 1893, for instance, hardly a load was wanted.

The raw material which the diggers provide is worked upon by the knappers at their own homes, in little sheds or outhouses. Having seated himself upon a low stool, the knapper affixes his 'knee-piece,' a stout pad formed of layers of leather, and upon this he places a mass of flint which he dexterously breaks, or quarters as he would say, with a heavy flat-faced hammer, taking care to strike in a slanting direction, that the full force of the blow may not be felt by the supporting limb. When the mass has been thus divided into convenient-sized pieces—cubes of about six inches—he exchanges the hammer he has been using for one that is much lighter and whose head is pointed at either end. With this he strikes off flakes extending from end to end of the quarter, if he is going on to the manufacture of gun-flints: or gives the stone a pyramidal form, if he desires to prepare it in the best way for the builder, completing the squaring of its face with his knapping hammer, a tool which may be likened to a few inches of a narrow iron hoop centred on a proportionately light haft. It is with his knapping hammer, also, that he fashions gun-flints, arrow-heads, spear-heads, and similar small articles from the flakes. The flakes are held one by one upon a chisel-shaped iron driven into a huge block, and are there chipped into the desired form. During this operation the knapper guards his right hand from the flying chips by a leather shield through which the haft of the hammer is inserted, but his eyes are unprotected, and often suffer in consequence. It is not, however, the larger

particles that are greatly to be feared, but those that are most minute. These form a dust with which the air becomes heavily charged, and entering the respiratory organs, work sad mischief there, phthisis or inflammation of the lungs usually ending a knapper's days before he has reached the prime of life.

By working from six o'clock in the morning to ten at night, an average knapper can finish from three thousand to four thousand flints, if the flakes are prepared beforehand, and he is paid at the rate of fourteen pence a thousand. In the same long day an expert can produce from seven thousand to ten thousand flakes. Flint-knapping is one of the few industries in which it has not been possible to apply machinery. Indeed, the probability is that the manufacture is carried on now, in all essential particulars, as it was when the human race was in its infancy, and that the only important change has been the substitution of iron hammers for those of flint. It has even been surmised that some of the technical terms are survivals of the speech of the earliest workers.

The gun-flints, which constitute the chief production of the industry, are exported mainly to Africa, although there is also a demand for them in India, China, and parts of South America. Their use is not entirely unknown even within the bounds of Great Britain. In February of last year, according to a report which appeared at the time in the local newspapers, a labouring man, near Ely, killed fifteen wild ducks at one discharge of an old-fashioned gun with flint-and-steel lock. But there does not remain among us a sufficient number of sportsmen similarly armed to affect the trade at Brandon.

In the busiest times, three-quarters of a million are sent away in a week, a quantity which one might, at first, be inclined to regard as sufficient to fully supply all demands for a considerable period; but a flint fails to emit sparks when it has been struck a few times. Some need to be replaced when only ten shots have been fired by their aid, while, with others, the gun may be discharged a hundred times. Those that are of the deepest colour are the most highly esteemed, and as the ultimate purchasers regard with disfavour a flint of which even but a small portion is white, the desired hue is imparted by the obliging manufacturer.

As would naturally be expected, flint implements of ancient make are found in the neighbourhood of Brandon, but the inexperienced collector is much more likely to purchase a modern imitation than to secure the genuine article, and, indeed, the production of counterfeits for sale by dealers is a recognised branch of the industry.

Unless there speedily arises a demand for dressed flint other than that which now exists, the art of the flint-knapper will be forgotten. A local optimist looks forward to the time when flint will be found in the pivoting work in the machines of our factories; but its value for that, or for some other purpose, must soon be recognised if skilled workers are to be ready to hand to meet the new demand. There are now only some seven diggers at Brandon and about twenty knappers, and these latter are all

that there are in England, with the exception of two who follow the trade at the Suffolk village of Icklingham. As the dusky inhabitants of the Dark Continent, and the barbaric tribes elsewhere, become civilised, they will lay aside their flint-muskets in favour of the latest needle-gun, and thus, according to the present prospect, the 'oldest trade in the world' is within measurable distance of extinction.

WOURALI:

A TALE OF BRITISH GUIANA.

'You fellows can believe it or not as you like,' said Mackay, 'but I tell you that for a day and a night I have known what it is to be dead.'

'Oh, come, Mac, that's too much. The Major has given us some pretty tall ones, but we can't quite swallow that.'

'Perhaps,' suggested the Major, 'Mackay refers to a state of alcoholic saturation. I have heard'—

'Shut up, Major!' interrupted Highfield. 'Don't be feeble.'

'Oh, all right,' said Mackay. 'Only you said it was my turn for a yarn; but of course if'—

'Fire away, Mac; never mind the Major; he's an unbelieving Jew when his own tales are bested. We'll believe you. Observe the childlike innocence of our countenances.'

'Very well then, you shall have the yarn.'

'It happened out in British Guiana. Phil Egerton and I had been knocking about that district in a yacht. Phil was a bit of a scientist; had dabbled in the ologies when he was at Oxford, and he found something to interest him in the shallow waters round the coast. The buckets of mud and slimy things he fished up weren't very exciting for me, so I put in a good deal of time hanging round the bars and billiard-rooms of Georgetown. Poker is a good game in the other hemisphere. You fellows don't rise to its possibilities here.'

'Take you on at half-a-sov. ante,' interrupted the Major.

'No thanks, Major. You've been there, I know. I bar you.'

'I don't think I could mention the place,' continued Mackay, 'that I've spent more than a month in without contriving to make a fool of myself over some girl. She was a barmaid this time, and, by Jove! she was pretty. We called her "The Queen," and I never knew her by any other name. What nationality she belonged to I can't tell you. I think she had a dash of most of them in her, but English, Spanish, and Indian were perhaps the most prominent—English in business, Spanish in love, but pure undiluted Indian in hate. It was a dangerous mixture, but you've no notion how fascinating. I wasn't by any means the only fellow who succumbed to her charms, but I believe I was the only one she cared a gin cocktail about. You'll admit that the position had its dangers. Of course I knew perfectly well that I was making an ass of myself, but I couldn't help it. The only thing for me to do was to bolt. If I stayed another

week I should marry her, and then there'd be the deuce to pay.

"Look here, Egerton," I said one night; "you've got to take me away from here. Leave those confounded weeds of yours and let's weigh anchor and be off."

"What's the matter, Mac?" said Egerton. "Got the fidgets? I'm sorry, old man, but I've discovered a new species among these said weeds, and I want to work it up."

"Well, Phil, my boy, if you won't leave, you'll have to be my best man, that's all."

"That frightened him a bit. I told him the whole story, and he saw there was no time to be lost if I was to be saved. Phil Egerton knew me pretty well in those days.

"I'll tell you what we'll do, Mac," he said. "You know Wilson the sugar-planter. He tells me there is some capital shooting to be had in the interior; any amount of birds and a chance at a stray jaguar or two. He's going to have a month of it, and has asked me to join him. We can take the yacht's boat and go up the Demerara until we strike the woods. What do you say?"

"Anything you like, so long as you get me out of this mess."

"We went in the morning and saw Wilson about it. He was delighted, and said he would start as soon as we could get ready.

"Of course any sensible man in my position would have had the common prudence to employ the intervening time in cleaning his guns and looking out various odds and ends for the expedition, but as I tell you, where women are concerned I'm not to be counted in the class of sensible men. I went to see 'The Queen,' and naturally she wormed the whole thing out of me.

"Phil," I said, when I got back, "if we can't start to-morrow we needn't go at all. It would spoil the party if I took a wife with me."

"We'll start to-night if you like, Mac. I'm ready; and if Wilson isn't, he can follow us. But what's the hurry? You haven't told her you're going, have you?"

"Yes, I have, and that's why it won't do for me to stay here longer."

"Well, Mac, of all the thundering idiots it has been my privilege to know. I do think you're about the biggest. Why on earth couldn't you vanish quietly and leave her to find out about it afterwards?"

"I meant to, but when I started talking to her, out it all came."

"What possessed you to go there at all to-day?"

"Oh, come, Phil, be reasonable. You couldn't have kept away yourself, if you'd been in my place."

"You had a scene, I suppose?"

"Well, slightly. She accused me of wanting to get rid of her, trying to run away, in fact; and as it was perfectly true, I fancy I didn't show up very well in the argument that followed."

"Oh, you great bearded infant; put your hat on and we'll go and see Wilson at once."

"We started next morning. I was feeling a bit hipped, of course, but the others were jolly enough. As I think I told you, Phil had a weakness for pottering about in scientific

messes, and he found a kindred spirit in Wilson, whose hobby was birds. It was really to get some specimens that he had originally proposed this expedition.

"By the way, Wilson," said Phil, "have you ever managed to get hold of any curare?"

"Curare?" said Wilson. "I don't know it; what is it?"

"Probably it has got some other name out here. We called it curare in Oxford—Indian arrow poison, you know."

"Oh! you mean 'wourali.' No, I can't say I have, and I don't think I want to either. It isn't a very safe plaything."

"Safe enough," said Phil, "so long as you haven't any cuts or scratches on your hands."

"For heaven's sake, shut up that scientific shop!" I exclaimed. "We've come out here to enjoy ourselves, not to talk like a confounded British Association meeting."

"Poor old Mac!" said Phil, "what shall we talk about? Will billiards do—or barnmaids?"

"Drop it, Phil," I said; "I don't want to be a bear, but your jargon isn't very interesting to a chap who hardly knows an ology from an ism. Let's have something to eat."

"We found a shady spot under some bushes to have our meal in. We were just lighting up afterwards, and I was holding the match to my pipe when something flashed out of the bushes and knocked the pipe out of my mouth.

"What's that?" said Phil, starting up.

"It's a dagger," I said. "Just see what's behind those bushes, you chaps, while I tie my handkerchief round this hand. I've got a bit of a scratch. If it's 'The Queen,' let her go. Thank goodness she missed my face."

"It was 'The Queen.' They caught sight of her among the bushes, but she got away all right. They didn't follow her far, but came back to see if I was much hurt.

"It's nothing serious," I said; "only a scratch, but I think my nerves must be a bit upset. It has made me feel horribly tired. I'll go and lie down in the boat for a while, and let you fellows finish your smoke. I've got a bit of a head."

"Mackay, you're crying," exclaimed Wilson, "and the sweat is simply pouring down your face. You're pretty badly hurt."

"Crying!" shouted Phil. "Wilson, that dagger is poisoned!"

"Poisoned? You don't mean"—

"Yes, I do. It's 'wourali'; copious secretion of sweat and tears, headache, feeling of extreme lassitude—those are the exact symptoms. Off with that bandage, Mac."

"Good heavens! he's done for," said Wilson.

"Done for? Not a bit of it. Off with that bandage; I'm going to suck the wound!"

"I had just got energy enough left to protest against his doing this, but he insisted, and I was too feeble to prevent him.

"Nonsense, man," he said; "I'm safe enough. The stuff isn't a poison taken internally, even if I do manage to swallow some."

"He put his lips to the wound, and then I closed my eyes and everything became blank.

"It must have been hours afterwards that I began slowly to regain, I can't say conscious-

ness, but an indefinite sensation of existence, and horrible weariness. It seemed to me that I was swimming on and on somewhere in a vague, purposeless way, and I was very, very tired. I call it swimming, but that isn't an exact description. I could feel my arms moving back and fore with a steady rhythmical motion, but the rest of my body was absolutely still. I was almost suffocating for want of air, but I didn't seem to have strength to gasp. How long that sensation lasted I can't say, but it must have been a very long time. I wouldn't voluntarily go through another hour of such unutterable and helpless misery for anything you could offer me. I tell you it has given me my theory of what future punishment may be like.

'As consciousness gradually returned, the feeling of infinite weariness became more and more unbearable. My arms were still swinging backwards and forwards like a couple of animated pump handles, and I was quite unable either to stop them or to move any other part of my body. Try and imagine the sensation; it was simply awful.

'When I did finally come to myself so far as to know what was going on, I did it pretty thoroughly. You know the theory that when a man loses the use of his eyes, his senses of touch and hearing become unusually acute? From my experience that day I can quite believe it. I had lost all power of motion, and my perceptive faculties became, to compensate, most uncomfortably keen. I felt as if I could almost see through my closed eyelids.

'Phil told me afterwards that the peculiarity of "wourali" poisoning is that if the dose is not very large, only the nerves of motion are paralysed, while those of sensation become abnormally sensitive. I knew everything that was going on round me, and I could hear every word they said, but I couldn't even wink to let them know I was alive.

'They had stuck a knife-handle between my teeth to keep my mouth open, and the weariness in my arms was caused by the fact that for nearly a day and a night Phil and Wilson had been taking it in turns to practice artificial respiration on me.

'Egerton," I heard Wilson say, "do you think it's any good going on longer? He hasn't breathed now for nearly twenty hours. I believe he's dead."

"We'll go on as long as we can stand!" said Phil, and I blessed him for it. "If we can only keep the artificial respiration going till the poison is eliminated, he will recover. For God's sake, keep it up as long as you can, Wilson."

"If you think there is the slightest chance of saving him, I'll go on; but I don't think I can last out much longer."

"He's still warm, Wilson, and I won't give up hope as long as that is so."

'That was a nice cheerful conversation to overhear, wasn't it? Listeners never hear good of themselves it is said, but I doubt whether the most persistent eavesdropper ever had the pleasure of hearing a man pronounce him dead, without being able to contradict the statement. If I hadn't begun to breathe spontaneously

pretty soon after that, I should never have had the opportunity of contradicting it. Phil and Wilson couldn't have gone on much longer. How they kept it up for the length of time they did I have never been able to understand. The power of friendship is very much underrated.

'It must have been about two hours after Wilson had declared that I was dead, that Phil saw my eyelids begin to twitch.

"At last, Wilson!" he cried. "Go and get some water from the river."

'They dashed the cold water over me, and it caused me to gasp slightly. It was enough; I had begun to breathe again. They carried me to the boat, and as soon as they saw the danger was over, they, both of them, sat down on the bottom boards and fell fast asleep. In a very few minutes after them, I was asleep too.

'Nearly fifteen hours after that, I woke, feeling rather weak and faint, but otherwise as right as a trivet. The other two were still asleep, and I didn't wake them.

'That is the story, and I don't think I was guilty of an exaggeration when I told you that for a day and a night I had known what death was. A man who remains for twenty-four hours without once drawing a breath may fairly claim to be dead, I think.'

AFTER LONG MONTHS.

AFTER long months we meet again

Among the nodding daffodils,
The light lies low along the plain,
And over all the purple hills;
The merry thrush sings out the day
With bursts of May-time madrigals,
And, from the freshly budded spray,
Through opening leaves, the chaff-chaff calls.

How different all when last we met
In dim fields dashed with Autumn rain,
And watched the last late swallow set
His wings towards the South again!
Long time we strove, with voices low,
And alien lips, light words to speak;
And was it rain that trembled so
From those long lashes down your cheek?

We parted, as the mists drew down,
The gray mists, gathering fold on fold,
And, through the dusk, the little town
Glimmered, far off, with sparks of gold.
We watched the lamps wake, one by one,
Gold stars beneath the starless sky,
And hand touched hand, and all was done
'Twixt hearts too full to say good-bye.

And now Spring stands, with sunny smile,
Over the dead months cold and gray;
I think we've dreamed a weary while
And awakened to the perfect day.
With Winter's snow and Autumn's rain
The days of lonely life are o'er;
Forget the parting and the pain
Since our two hearts have met once more.

S. CORNISH WATKINS.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OR

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 630.—VOL. XIII. SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

SOCIAL CRIMES.

By Mrs LYNN LINTON.

THE Ten Commandments do not cover the whole ground of modern immorality. Of course they tabulate certain grave elemental crimes, the infraction of which brings society to hopeless ruin; but they do not touch on vices like betting, gambling, drinking, extravagance—which yet are disastrous and pernicious enough—and they do not so much as brush the skirts of those misdemeanours we have called social crimes; which misdemeanours, however, are many and grievous, and fertile in pain and annoyance to those who suffer therefrom.

In the matter of invitations now, what criminals some people are! They send you a friendly and informal invitation to dinner, worded so that you expect no one but the family as it is. You go in your tidiest home gown, but it is a home gown at the best, and you find an assemblage of eighteen, all pranked in festal array, whereby you are made to look like a dingy London sparrow among humming-birds and parakeets. Or contrariwise, you get a formal card presaging a 'stately spread,' and you find a shabby, little, irregular bunch of five, among whom one man is in his morning coat, and the ladies are all 'high up to the throat.' This discrepancy between the form and the thing—the implied promise and the practical fulfilment—is one of the social crimes for which the perpetrator should be somehow made responsible. It may not be so bad as theft or murder, but it is bad enough in all conscience, and looms very large in that list of social crimes of which all good conformists do well to take heed.

Side by side with this crime is that other—delay in answering invitations—which makes the life of an intending hostess a veritable burden to her, and adds so infinitely to her difficulties. In spite of the request, in the corner, for an early answer—in spite of the general knowledge that this early answer is

essential to the peace of mind of the hostess and the success of the dinner—the unconscientious among the invited neglect this primal law of social morality, and keep back the answer for days—perhaps a week—for no good reason whatever. One of the most flagrant instances of this not uncommon social immorality was in the action of a certain lady, who neglected for a whole week to answer a dinner invitation. The intending hostess called; left a card with a pencilled query: 'Am I to have the pleasure of seeing you and Mr — on the 18th?' The next morning came a curt and formal acceptance, without a word of apology for the delay. At seven o'clock on the day of the dinner—which was for eight—a note was brought regretting unavoidable absence, as Mr — had a cold. Now here was crime upon crime—a Pelion upon Ossa of social misdemeanours, either of which ought to have been sufficient to insure ostracism up to a certain point. Another case, just as bad, was that of a young man who was engaged to dine with all due ceremony at a rather important private dinner. At the eleventh hour he sent an excuse. The day was fine; he had an offer of a moonlight row on the river; the temptation was too strong for his social virtue to resist. He threw over his hostess and the dinner, and chose Richmond and the moonlight instead. Needless to say he had his reward; and the doors of that special house were for ever after closed against him.

Another social crime is the intrusion of comparative strangers on your privacy, indifferent to the fact that you have a day when you are at home to your world of acquaintances not taking rank as friends. These comparative strangers have no right to call on you at all. They have neither asked leave nor been requested; but suddenly, for their own convenience and to while away an unoccupied hour, they make an incursion out of calling time and not on your day of reception, and plant themselves there, like old and intimate friends. This, too, is a social misdemeanour that deserves

both punishment and rebuke. Of the same class is neglect to return a formal visit which the one has prayed the other to make. When acquaintance has ripened into friendship, then the counting of visits, to and from, is an indignity and ridiculous. But while things are in the early stages, before the husk has been removed or the starch washed out, we have to be careful and exact; and a 'blazer' in an evening party is not more out of place than the careless freedom of intimacy attempted with one who is only on the first line of an undeveloped acquaintance.

To intentionally overdress for a small and informal gathering is, again, a social crime meriting castigation. To intentionally underdress for a gorgeous affair of diamonds and orders, is the same crime turned round and showing the other side. The one is an ostentatious kind of reproach which brings shame and confusion into the ranks of the entertainer—a reproach of poverty and meanness, of insufficiency and being below the mark, unpleasant enough to the one on whose head this special vial has been poured out. The other is in its essence an arrogant insult, as who should say: 'You are not worth making a fuss about. Your best is only parallel with my second-rate, when all is said and done. I, in my older clothes, and by no means "spiffy" in my get-up, am quite as good as you in your diamonds and orders; and so I would have you understand.' This was the verbal translation of that famous appearance, when a man of light and leading in his own way, arrived at Mrs B's grand evening party, in muddy boots and with trousers turned up over the ankles. On the same plane, as far as heinousness of social offence is concerned, is the sin of unpunctuality, which in its special essence is also an arrogant insult and the very soul of ill-breeding.

These are the chief of what we may call the circumstantial crimes of which those in society are guilty. The more spiritual misdemeanours are even worse. Chief of these more spiritual immoralities is the habit of evil-speaking in general, and specially of evil-speaking against those from whom you have just this moment accepted hospitality. Those sneers at the dinner! those gibes at the music! those ill-natured jests to the disfavour of the host, of the hostess, of the guests, of the whole arrangements! How hateful they all are! and what a bad heart, if not a weak, feather-headed brain, they show! This indeed is one of the worst social crimes we know, coming as it does into the category of immoralities of a profounder nature than itself. All this group of faults needs the knife; and none are more common. And none are more contagious for the one part—more deep-seated for the other. The habit of ill-nature is like a cancer that eats daily deeper and deeper into the flesh, poisoning the blood, and finally destroying the life, which here means truth and charity. We may attack types as vigorously as possible, but individuals should be sacred. Where the cap fits, so much the worse for the head whereon it is set; where the individual falls into the ranks of the type, the lash cast round his shoulders is undirected by the design of the executioner.

This is a very different thing from the personal ill-nature which permeates society and eddies round in poisonous talk, besmirching all on whom it falls—that dishonourable and dishonest treachery which smiles in the face and stabs at the back, which pretends friendship and practises hostility. Yet how many of this kind one knows in what is called the world! People of whose loyalty no one can be sure, disloyal indeed as they are all. Yet we are simple enough to think that we individually shall be exempt. Every one else, but not we. The sugar given to us is pure, though that to others is poisoned through and through. When we come to the knowledge that we fare just as badly as those others, we are then indignant, and cry: 'Who would have thought it?' holding up our hands in horror at the treachery every one could see but we ourselves.

Cognate with this crime is that other—the betrayal of confidences—with its weaker shadow, the retailing of gossip and the repeating of conversations, quasi-confidential and not meant to be repeated. All these are different shades of the same thing; and a bad thing it is. More than half the mischief that takes place in society has its rise in this dishonourable chatter—now repeating things not meant to be scattered broadcast; now carrying from house to house that hideous rag-bag of gossip; now more gravely breaking trust, and betraying positive confidences, to the infinite damage of all concerned. Is it not Horace who says that even a quarrel with your friend does not absolve you, his confidant, from the duty of keeping sacred his confidences? And if not a quarrel, where it is to be supposed there has been wrong on both sides—you naturally thinking the wrong done to you as big as a mountain, and yours done to him no heavier than a gossamer thread—then assuredly not for idleness; not for the desire to show your own importance and how you have been trusted; not for the baser love of destroying the prestige of others, that you may appear all the whiter and higher; not for any of the puerile motives which create that mean wretch, a gossip, are you justified in betraying what has been confided to your honour. The betrayer of confidences is a social criminal of the deepest dye; and though he does not come into the list of the Ten, he is in the index expurgatorius, together with his brother, the 'Mauvaise langue'—him of the bitter speech and ill-natured commentary.

Social crimes are that heedless speaking before strangers of religion, politics, and people, by which we so often tumble fathoms deep into conversational bogs, and that ferret-eyed inquisitiveness which wants to know, you know, all and everything there is to know about all and every one within hail. This last is a common hotel fault, and the others are rather of the drawing-room and the club. Of the mistakes made by the unwary about people, anecdotes are rife; and ludicrous enough are the efforts by which the culprit has sought his release from that coil wherein he did so wilfully entangle himself. 'That ugly woman?'—'My wife'—'No, that other?'—'My sister,' is the norm of all the rest. For almost always these incautious babblers speak in dispraise, not in

praise, and so are flung over the rocks, with no hope of redemption. No man pities them, for when we come to think of it, it is an evil thing to fall foul of even the looks of an unoffending stranger, against whom you can have no kind of grudge. If she be homely to the extent of hideousness, what business is it of yours to say so? Cannot you keep your opinion to yourself? Are you the edile sent out to arrange the world's standard of good looks, with leave and license to trounce all those who do not come up to the mark? Behind that homely mask—we will call it muzzle if you will—may hide a soul of purest loveliness. And this goes further in the long-run than the most exquisite face that ever made your dreams like hours spent in Paradise, with a vacant mind or a corrupted heart.

As for religion or politics, he who introduces among strangers these vexed questions must be such an absolute idiot as to call forth pity rather than condemnation. It is one of the first things we are taught to avoid—one of the first practical lessons we receive while we are yet young and callow and ignorant of the precepts of worldly wisdom. In these days of multifarious shades of faith and passionate partisanship in politics, reticence is more and more imperative, and it behoves us to keep a calm sough indeed, if we would not come to humiliation. With excitable folk politics act as the proverbial red rag to the bull. Discussion is impossible. Fury in attack and unbridled wrath in defence, are like the clanging of sword and shield. And only fear of that helmeted and blue-coated guardian of the public peace, stolidly marching outside, keeps the belligerents from fisticuffs and mutual pommelling. Social crime as the discussion is, the combatants have sense enough not to let it broaden out into a legal misdemeanour; but at the best it is a sin which adds to its sinfulness the further disgrace of being a blunder.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

CHAPTER II.—THE COUSIN.

In these days of self-restraint we neither weep nor rage; we neither pour out lamentations nor curses.

When a young man of the old days lost his fortune, or his mistress, or both, I believe that he thought it no scorn to let his wailings or his curses be heard by all the world. In these days the young man walks to his club—perhaps it will be his last appearance there—dines as usual with his everyday face and his smile for a friend, and presently goes home.

I am but a child of my generation. Therefore, I did this. And at ten o'clock or so I returned to my chambers.

Outside the door I found waiting for me a man whose appearance was not familiar to me. The man was young, tall, and well set up;

dressed well enough, but hardly with the stamp of to-day's Piccadilly.

'Are you Sir George Burnikel?' he asked bluntly, without taking off his hat or touching the brim in the way common with servitors.

'I believe I am. But I do not seem to know you.'

'May I have ten minutes' conversation with you?'

'Certainly not, unless I know who you are and what you want. So, my friend, as ten o'clock at night is not the most usual time for a call, perhaps you will go away and write your business.'

'I have come a good step,' he persisted. 'And I have waited for two hours. If you could see me to-night, Sir George, I should be very much obliged.'

'Who are you, then?'

'My name is Robert Burnikel. I am a cousin of yours.'

'Never heard that I had any cousin of that name, I assure you.'

'I am a distant cousin. I do not want to beg or to borrow money of you, I assure you. I came in the hope that you would listen to me, and perhaps give me some advice. By trade I am a boat-builder; I carry on the same business, in the same place, that your great-grandfather did before he quarrelled with his partner and left Wapping.'

After such an introduction I had no more hesitation, but I turned the key and threw open the door. 'Come in,' I said; 'I am sure it's all right. The hereditary calling of our family is boat-building. The head of the family should always be a boat-builder. Come in.' I led the way into the study, and touched the switch of the light. 'Now,' I said, 'if you like to sit down and talk I will listen. There is soda-water, with the usual accessories, on the table with cigarettes.'

My visitor declined the proffered hospitality. Now that he had taken off his hat and was standing under the bright electric light, the cousin appeared at first to be merely a good-looking young man with a certain roughness of manner as of dress. But as I looked at him, I became gradually aware that this young man was most curiously like myself: I have broad shoulders, but his were broader; I am tolerably tall, but he was taller; my head is pretty large, but his was larger; my forehead is square, but his was squarer; my nose is straight, but his was straighter. Even his hair was the same, and that grew in short strong brown curls all over his head—the kind of hair that is never found decorating the skull of an ordinary weak-kneed Christian. The hair of Mr Feeble-mind and Mr Ready-to-halt is straight. Therefore I have always been pleased to possess stubbly, curly hair. His voice, too, was like my own, only stronger and fuller. To complete the resemblance, I have the short broad fingers of a workman—these fingers force a man to buy a lathe; they never gave me any peace until I had got the lathe. My visitor had exactly the same hand, but it was larger. Strange that after so many generations the

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resemblance between two cousins should be so strong.

Mr Robert Burnikel took a chair and cleared his throat. 'It is a personal matter,' he said, 'and it is somewhat difficult to begin.'

'Looks like borrowing money, after all,' I thought. 'If I may suggest,' I said, 'you might tell me, first, something of the family history. It is ninety years since the connection of my branch with yours was broken off. I am, I regret to say, shamefully ignorant of my own people.'

'Well, Sir George. There was a boat-builder at Wapping died about the year 1780. He wasn't the first of the boat-builders by a hundred years and more; you will find his tomb—one of the fine square tombs on the south side of Wapping church. The churchyard is full of Burnikels. If you think it worth while to be proud of such a thing, you belong to the oldest and most respectable family of Wapping.'

'Of course one likes to feel that there are respectable ancestors.'

'That old man, who died at the age of eighty-five, was great-great-grandfather to both of us.'

'I see. Our cousinship starts a hundred years ago. It hath a venerable aspect.'

'He left two sons at least; those two sons carried on the business in partnership until they died or retired. Then, two of their sons—I don't know anything about the rest—took it over as partners. They quarrelled—I daresay you have heard why,' he looked up quickly and paused—'and they dissolved partnership. One came to this end of the town and became a builder, the other stayed at Wapping, and his son, and his grandson, and his great-grandson—that's myself—have conducted that business ever since. I am now the sole owner of the concern.'

'It is rather bewildering, at first. One would like it in black and white. However, the point is that your branch of our family has remained at Wapping carrying on the old business all these years. I fear there has been little intercourse between the two main currents of the stock.'

'None, I believe. But we were able to follow the fortunes of your branch.'

'There were other offshoots, I suppose, tributary streams, cadet branches, with you as with us?'

'Yes, some of us are in Australia; some are in Canada; some are in New Zealand; some are boat-builders; some are farmers; some of us are sailors; we are scattered all over the world.'

'And some of you rich?'

'None of us are rich. Your great-grandfather, though he called himself a builder, of course, had no necessity to work.'

'No necessity to work? Why not?'

'Why, on account of his immense wealth.'

'Wealth? He had very little. Although as to work, he was a most industrious person. He stamped his image in stucco all over Kensington. But he made very little money. Where did you get this notion of his enormous wealth?'

'Well,' the cousin looked doubtful, but for

the moment he evaded the point. 'When one of his sons became a lawyer, and his father being so rich'—

'Again you are misinformed. My great-grandfather left a moderate fortune, and my grandfather had his share of it and no more.'

'We always understood, to be sure, that your grandfather was so rich that he was able to buy his place as judge and his title.'

At this amazing theory I jumped in my chair and sat upright. 'Good Lord! man!' I cried. 'Where were you—where could you be—brought up? Where do they still preserve prejudices pre—pre—pre-medieval?'

'I was born and brought up in Wapping.'

'Can remote Wapping be such a God-forsaken country as to believe that judges buy their seats? Are you so incredibly ignorant as to believe that?'

'I don't know.' He coloured. 'Perhaps we were wrong. They said so. I never questioned it. I never really thought about it. My grandmother used to tell us so.'

'Your grandmother! Permit me to say, newly-found cousin, that my respect for the Wapping grandmother begins to wobble. My grandfather was made judge for the usual reason, that he was a very great lawyer.'

'He died worth a quarter of a million.'

'Well, and why the deuce should he not? If you make from five to ten thousand a year by your practice, and only spend one, and go on doing that for thirty years, and get five per cent. all the time for your money, you will find yourself worth all that at the end of the time. But why are you telling me all this stuff about my own people? Have you got something up your sleeve? Have it out, man.'

'Well, Sir George, the story of that bag of diamonds and things has never been forgotten. It rankled down to my own time. My father used to grow gloomy when business was bad, and he thought of the diamonds.'

'What had that to do with my grandfather?'

'And the fortune that the judge was reported to have left behind him—a quarter of a million—was exactly the value that old John Burnikel set upon the diamonds that your great-grandfather took.'

'My great-grandfather took? Man, you've got a bee in your bonnet. It was not that much-injured old man, but your great-grandfather—yours—who—I always understood took the jewels.'

The cousin laughed gently, but shook his head.

'That was the story they told you, of course. Why, it is nearly a hundred years ago, and we have always been quite narrow in our means, working hard, living carefully, and spending little. Never a rich man among us. Those of us who were not in the business went to sea; not a single man died rich.'

'Then,' said George, 'you must have buried the precious diamonds. My great-grandfather left a few thousands only, and my grandfather had great difficulty in keeping himself until his practice began and increased.'

'Well, they always told me'—

'If you come to that, they always told me.'—

'If the bag was not taken by your great-grandfather, who could have taken it?'

'Yours, my dear sir—yours.'

'For no one knew of its existence except those two and the old man John Burnikel. And they found him dying and the bag gone. Not dead, or the bag might have been stolen by some one else. But sick and dying, and the thing was gone.'

'Well, Mr Burnikel, you are a stranger to me, and I think I will not discuss any further the difficult question as to who stole a bag ninety years ago. My ancestor certainly did not, and I do not wish to accuse your ancestor. Perhaps the bag was stowed away somewhere: in a bank; in a merchant's strong room'—

'He was only a simple sailor. He knew nothing about banks or strong rooms.'

'The person who took it—not necessarily your ancestor and certainly not mine—put it somewhere and died without revealing the secret. If you come to think of it, a bag of diamonds into which you dipped whenever you wanted to sell one was rather a dangerous kind of thing to keep. Bankers, not boat-builders, as a rule, keep bags of diamonds. It is somewhere—hidden away—in your back garden, perhaps.'

'Not ours.'

'Or perhaps there never was any bag of diamonds at all.'

'Oh! Yes there was. We've got the old sailor's bed at home with the secret hiding-place at the head, and his chest brass-bound'—

'The empty chest proves the existence of the treasure, I suppose. You have not told me why you came here to-night. Not, I take it, to talk over the Legend of the Lost Treasure?'

'The reason why I came here this evening is this. You know the world and I do not. I want your advice. It is this way. I mean to rise in the world. Wapping is all very well—what there is of it. But after all, it is not everything.'

'Not everything, I suppose.'

'It is, in fact, only a corner of the world. I mean to get out of it.'

'Very good.'

'I see, everywhere, men no better than myself—not so good—working-men, getting distinction on the School Board and on the County Council, and even,' he gasped, 'even Elsewhere,' he said, with a kind of awe and in capitals. 'And I don't see why I should not get on too.'

'Why not? Why not? If you like the kind of work.'

'In short, Sir George—you will not laugh at me—I mean to go into the House.'

'Why should I laugh at you?'

'I will show you afterwards, if you like, on another occasion, my chances and my fitness.'

'To-night you will explain to me, perhaps, where I come in—why you come to me. I am the worst person in the world to advise.'

'I do not ask advice about my own intentions,' said the political candidate, with a

certain dignity. 'I advise myself. I am going into the House. What I want you to tell me is this—I have no means at Wapping of finding out how one sets to work in the first instance; how you let people know that you are going to stand; how you find a borough; what it costs, and all the rest of it. If you can give or get for me this information, Sir George, it is all that I shall ask you, and I shall be extremely obliged to you.'

'I can't give it, but I can get it for you, I daresay. At all events I will try.'

'That is very kind of you. Let me once get it'—the man's eyes flashed—'and I will succeed. I am an able man, Sir George—I am not boasting—I am stating a plain fact—I am a very able man; and I shall get on, you shall see. You shall not be ashamed to own your cousin. I shall rise.'

He did rise. Perhaps to illustrate his prophecy. He got up and took his hat.

'I know exactly what I mean to have,' said the confident young man—yet the arrogance of his words was tempered by a certain modesty of utterance—'and I know how to get it. But I must get into the House first. I've planned it all out. It takes time to make one's way. In five year's time—I only ask five years—I shall be Home Secretary!'

'What?'

'Home Secretary,' he repeated calmly. 'Nothing less than that to begin with.'

'Oh! nothing less than that.'

'After that I don't say, nor do I even begin to think. Why, there are a dozen men now in the House who have gone in like me in order to get distinction. I read the debates and I see how these men get on. And I understand their secret, which is open to all. I'm not going to join any party. I shall be an Independent member, and I shall rise by my own exertions and my own abilities.'

I remembered that afternoon's dream, about myself. Good heavens! And here was this man—of my own name—of my own age—so much like myself—this cousin—coming to me with exactly the ambition desired for me by Lady Frances! Was this man who called himself a boat-builder—perhaps in some allegorical sense—really myself? The builder of a boat might be the builder of a man. Was this cousin my own nobler self, the complete and fully developed George?

'I should like,' my visitor continued, 'to show you that I am not an empty boaster. Let me call again. Or perhaps you would wish to see the place that you came from. Come over to Wapping. The yard is not a bit changed. It is just what it was two hundred years ago, when the first Burnikel came to the place. Come at any time; I am always there.'

'Thank you. I will call upon you to-morrow afternoon. Good-night; and, I say, when you have nothing better to do, dig up the back garden and find that precious bag. It may help to pay your election expenses.'

He departed. I remained strangely disturbed. After all the events of the day—the loss of fortune, the fatal absence of ambition; to meet this man—arrogant, presumptuous, ignorant. Home Secretary to begin with! A tradesman

of the East End! And yet—yet there was something in the calm confidence of the man, and in the look of strength. But—Home Secretary to begin with!

(To be continued.)

MONAZITE AND ITS USES.

It is not to be expected that the word 'monazite' is familiar to the general reader, for until recently even the mineral itself was little more than a name to most chemists. But we propose to show how, by reason of a recent ingenious invention, it now comes home to the business and bosom of most of us. In brief, monazite is a natural phosphate of cerium, thorium, and lanthanum, all of which belong to the obscure order of metals; and it is in respect of its thorium constituent that the mineral attracts our present interest. Thorium is a heavy gray metal, which was first discovered about seventy years ago in a somewhat rare Norwegian mineral called thorite. It has the peculiarity of burning into a white oxide when heated in the air, and it is not acted upon by water. The oxide is white, infusible in all acids except sulphuric, and of all metallic oxides is said to be the most 'refractory' to heat.

It is by reason of these properties that thorium has solved the problem of the incandescent gas-lamp. Everybody knows the mysterious 'mantle' that in the new lamp turns the long-familiar yellow flame of the gas into a dense, brilliant, white light; and everybody must have wondered what the 'mantle' is, and to what it owes its astonishing properties. Well, though the method of preparing the 'mantle' is a secret process of the patentees, we will explain the general principle of it.

The 'mantle,' then, is a sort of stocking, loosely woven of cotton, and having the end tied up with asbestos thread. After being sewn, it is plunged into a bath of liquid the chief component of which is monazite, the leading virtue of which, again, is in the thorium it contains. After it has been sufficiently soaked, the 'stocking' is drawn over a metal stand and allowed to dry gradually. Then it is burned from the top downwards, and the remainder is a white skeleton composed of cotton ashes and the metals of the liquor. In itself the skeleton or 'mantle,' as it is now, is infusible, and when placed over a properly prepared burner, instantly makes the gas-flame incandescent.

It is one of the most remarkable things in the history of artificial lighting, and has come as a boon and a blessing to those for whom electricity is still too expensive. Indeed, many people prefer the incandescent gas-lamp to the electric light. There are now several incandescent lamps in the market, but their rival claims to priority do not concern us here. That best known is the patent of the Ritter von Welsbach, for the manufacture of which large factories have been erected at Vienna, Berlin, and elsewhere on the Continent. A patent for an incandescent lamp was taken out by an American, named William Lake, some years ago, but the patent was allowed to lapse, and we are not aware if it embodied the principle of the 'mantle.'

The liquid in which the 'stockings' are steeped contains, besides the ingredients of monazite (namely, thorium, cerium, and lanthanum), certain proportions of didymium, erbium, yttrium, and zircon, but thorium is the essential element. When the new lamp and mantle was first introduced, the supplies of Norwegian thorite soon proved inadequate, and there arose a demand for any material containing thorium in appreciable quantity. Thus it was that monazite became an article of commerce, having till then been a neglected, and practically unknown, mineral. It was at first obtained from Brazil, Norway, and a little from Russia, but now the largest source of supply is the United States.

The monazite of North America is found for the most part in the Carolinas, large deposits having been recently discovered in North Carolina, and in the northern counties of South Carolina. In this region the mineral is found among the sand and gravel in the bed of small streams, but the richest deposits are at the head-waters of the streams, among the detritus of gneiss and schist, &c. In such places monazite is found both in pure crystals of the size of a grain of wheat, or even larger, and as sand in which very small crystals of the mineral are mixed up with ordinary sand and other material. The larger crystals are easily gathered by hand, and the people of the districts where they are found employ their leisure time in gathering them for storekeepers who collect them for the wholesale traders.

The sand is treated much as in 'washing' for gold—that is to say, it is shovelled into a box through which a stream of water is directed, which carries away the ordinary sand and lighter material, and leaves the heavier monazite crystals at the bottom, along with particles of iron, &c. The residuum is taken out of the box and dried, after which it is subjected to treatment by a magnet to extract the particles of iron. After this treatment, the marketable 'monazite sand' should contain from fifty to sixty per cent. of monazite, and is worth on the spot about five cents per pound, while the pure crystals are valued at from ten to twelve cents per pound.

The chief demand, however, is for the pure crystal, as it is complained that the American sand is not always properly cleaned, and has been sometimes shipped with a quite unpayable proportion of real monazite in it. If the monazite sand is reasonably clean, and will yield not less than from two to three per cent. of thorium, it seems to answer the purpose required; but the best North Carolina monazite yields from four to six and a half per cent. of thorium, besides cerium and lanthanum. It is now proposed that the sand should be treated on the spot, and only the valuable material extracted for shipment, to save the cost of carriage of a great bulk of worthless stuff. A process has recently been invented by a German chemist for the economical extraction of oxide of thorium direct from the mineral, and it is designed to organise the monazite industry of the Carolinas on a thoroughly scientific basis.

In Germany the demand for monazite is said to be ahead of the available supplies, owing to

the rapid extension of the incandescent lamp, the profits on which have enabled the manufacturing company to pay fabulous dividends. The Scandinavian deposits of thorite seem nearly exhausted, and though monazite has been found in Russia, it does not seem to exist there—at any rate, so far as is known—in commercial quantities. The Norwegian thorite ore (as distinguished from monazite) usually yields from forty to sixty per cent. of thorium, and the value of it is stated to be from six to eight shillings per kilogram for each per cent. of the metal in the ore.

Pure thorium used to be worth about £50 per pound, but now that monazite has come into the market, it runs only about £7 to £10 per pound. When the first cargoes of Brazilian monazite were imported, they brought about £85 per ton of sand, containing from three to three and a half per cent. of thorium; but such has been the effect of the development of supplies in Brazil and in North America (for Canada is now also yielding some), that the price went steadily down, and was as low as £15 per ton at the port of importation.

Monazite is not merely proportionally lower in value than the Norwegian thorite ores, but is further depreciated by the fact that it costs a good deal more to extract the thorium from monazite than from thorite. The work of analysis, too, is said to be especially difficult, and not one that every analytical chemist can achieve, or that every laboratory is equipped for.

The richest monazite sand, so far, has been found in Brazil, in the southern part of the State of Bahia. There it is gathered on an immense stretch of beach along the coast, from which it is shovelled up and loaded into vessels of light draught. At first the deposits were free to all comers, but now that the value of them is known, the working of them has been brought under regulation by the Government. This Bahian beach-sand is said to contain eighty per cent. of monazite, and the monazite from three to three and a half per cent. of thorium, so that it is richer than the North Carolina sand, but not so valuable as the Carolinian monazite crystals.

These, however, are but a few of the facts we have been able to glean of a quite new industry, the existence of which is known to very few, while the purpose which has called it into being is now familiar to everybody.

AFTER THE FACT.*

CHAPTER IV.

I AWOKE between clean sheets in a narrow, natty berth. I had been stripped to the singlet, and yet handled with evident kindness. My clothes hung tidily from a peg; they were swaying very gently to and fro, like the candlestick in its socket, and the curtains of my bunk. I was aboard the *Mollyhawk*, and the *Mollyhawk* was out at sea. I bounded to the floor, to the port; it was open, and I looked out into the alleyway. They had imprisoned me, then, in a deck-house stateroom;

no doubt the door was locked. I tried it, found it unlocked, had a vision of white napery and bright silver in the main cabin, and closed the door more calmly than I had opened it. After all, I was in the hands of a deliberate, cool, resourceful rascal; my only weapons, therefore, were coolness, deliberation, and resource.

So I dressed myself with care, and ere I was ready, could smile at the simple wiles which had ensnared me. The simplicity, however, was that of genius; the two farewell letters, of which one, alas! was evidently genuine; the well-acted depression and the air of resigned defeat at the close of a long day in loathly hiding. These pretences, so transparent now, struck no shame to my heart as I recalled them; for I knew that, were it all to come over again, I should be again deceived. What was must be endured; it was of no use thinking about it; one must think of what might yet be done. But where were we—through the Heads? By the gentle, joyful motion it was impossible to tell. Had we shown our heels? And for what port in all the world were we bound? As if in answer, the tramp of feet and the sound of rough voices in unison came to me at that moment through the open port:

O where are you going to, my pretty maid?
Wa-ay, Rio!
O where are you going to, my pretty maid?
We're bound for Rio Grande!"

I had learned and liked the chanty in my voyage out in the Glasgow clipper; and half involuntarily, half out of bravado, I was joining in the chorus when I appeared on deck. I even lent a hand at the capstan, as Deedes had done himself, and I had the satisfaction of silencing his voice with the first note of my own:

'An' it's he-ey, Rio!
Wa-ay, Rio!
Sing fare you well,
You bonny young gell,
We're bound for——

'Belay!' cried the jolly rich voice of that great villain, my churchyard acquaintance of Western Beach. As our eyes met, he honoured me with a jovial nod; then my white duck suit came between us, a little creased, but spotless as on the night before; and Deedes was looking me up and down.

'You're a cool one, too,' said he. 'Well, I'm blown!'

'I am studying in a cool school,' said I. 'Deedes, I admire you; more than ever; there!'

'That's very nice of you, Beetle.'

'Not a bit; it won't prevent me from getting even with you the first chance I see.'

'You'll find that difficult.'

'I shall stick at nothing.'

His face darkened. He had shaved himself clean since the night, and as he showed me his teeth, I thought I had never seen so vile a mouth. It had degenerated dreadfully since his boyhood.

'Take care,' he snarled; 'you're being done pretty well so far. You've the best stateroom aboard, and the cuddy tuck's all right. But

don't you forget we've got a hold and irons, and rats and rancid pork as well!

He turned on his heel, and I walked to the binnacle. Next moment he joined me there, dropping a hand upon my shoulder.

'East-by-south-a-quarter-east,' said he; 'we cleared the Heads last night—bound for Rio Grande, or something like it—and that chunk on the port bow is Wilson Promontory. So now you know; and look here, Beetle, old chap, you've been good to me; I'm hanged if I'll be rough on you. Did you really think I was going to do as we said? My good fellow, how could you? See here, Beetle. The yacht's a well-known yacht, Watson's a well-known yachtsman, and he was in Melbourne to divert suspicion the day I did the trick. He stands in for his share. Why not stand in yourself? You've earned your little bit, if anybody has!'

'You promised not to be rough on me,' said I wearily. 'That's rough. Have you got it all aboard?'

'Have I not! Every penny-piece!'

'And who's Watson?'

I was at once introduced to the big man in blue, with the superfluous comment, 'I believe you've met before. Captain Watson owns and skips this ship, and I skip and own the money; I'm purser, so to speak, but there'll be fair do's at the end of the voyage. You'd much better stand in, Beetle. The captain and I are both quite clear on the point.'

'Oh, so am I,' cried I ironically. 'When one of you two has knifed the other for his share, I intend sticking the one who's left!'

'I consider that remark,' said the captain, colouring, 'in the worst of taste; and if you weren't a friend of Mr Deedes, I should kick you off my quarter-deck.'

Mr Deedes looked thunderous, but said nothing.

'Oh, come,' said I; 'if we can't have our joke, what can we have? I admit, if there'd been any truth in what I said—any chance or possibility of truth—I should have merited a visitation from the captain's boots; but as I was talking arrant nonsense, what did it matter?'

I expected a blow for that, and tried to look as though I did not, being extremely anxious to return it with effect. I was, in fact, the slave all this time of emotional cross-currents, which made my revulsion from these villains the stronger because it was not continuous. I had more than tolerated them at first, but all at once I found myself desiring hold and rats and irons, rather than a continuance of their society. At this moment, however, the old and evil-looking steward was to be seen carrying smoking dishes to the house; the sight appealed to me in another place; and I will own to having changed my manner with some abruptness, and to adding an apologetic word on top of that.

'All right,' said Deedes savagely. 'You've said about enough, and in the cuddy I'll trouble you to hold your tongue altogether. The mate's asleep in the other stateroom—look out you don't lose yours! Look out this isn't your first and last meal up here!'

After breakfast I smoked a pipe in the cross-trees, and looked in vain for a passing funnel. There were but few and insignificant sails in sight, and those in the wrong direction. The sea was like a great blue plate, the schooner a white ant crawling in its centre. The wind had freshened; it had always been fair; white horses rode the sea, but the wavelets were never waves. But for the swell, we might have been in Corio Bay. Should I ever see it again, I wondered, with the straight streets sloping to its brink? And I wondered if Deedes had the same thought, as he leant over the taffrail studying the wake; or had he more pangs and fears than he pretended, and were we less safe?

Presently he turned, exchanged a few words with the captain, who was doing a short trick at the wheel; disappeared for a moment in the house; and then came aloft as if to join me. He did join me, but without a word; he was armed with a telescope, but not, I thought, with the cool assurance of the early morning. And so I left him, perched against the sky, sweeping the horizon with his glass, a prey to poisonous apprehensions which were meat and drink to me.

Yet my eyes were good, and they had descried no sign of sail or smoke to windward. Why then this change in our bold buccaneer? It puzzled me as I reached the deck, and I looked up at Deedes once more with my hand upon the brilliant brass knob of the house door; but the puzzle solved itself as I opened it and stepped inside. Ethel P'Anson was seated at the table.

CHAPTER V.—CONCLUSION.

'Miss P'Anson!' I fairly shouted.

'Yes, it is I. He said I should not see you. Do go—do go before he comes!'

'Go!' I cried. 'Not see you! I shall see you and stay with you until I'm dragged out by force. That is—I added suddenly—'unless you are here of your own free will. Of course, in that case!'

'No, no!' cried the girl. 'By trickery! By wicked, heartless, abominable lies! Nothing else—oh, nothing else would have brought me to this!'

'Then we're in the same boat with a vengeance,' said I, seating myself on the opposite side of the table. 'Tell me how it happened—and quickly. He has talked already of putting me in irons; he'll do it, after this!'

'Oh, where am I to begin? There is so much to tell— But he shall *not* do it!' vowed Miss P'Anson. 'He shall *not* separate the only two honest people in the ship! Oh yes, it was lies, but lies so clever and so fiendish! Let me tell you all. I'll try to be quick. He has been in the bank about a year. You know him perhaps better than I. They say you were at school together. You must know his good points, Mr Bower. I mean the points that would attract a girl. They attracted me. I made a fool of myself. You must have heard about it in Geelong. Well, it's quite true; but it wasn't yesterday, or the day before, or last week. It was in the very beginning. I got over it long ago. But he has always fasci-

nated me. You know him—you can understand? Well, when the bank was robbed I knew he had done it; I can't tell you how I knew, but know I did. His voice was not real. I have been made love to in that voice—there! Well, I went to his rooms. He lunched there every day. I saw his landlady. He had come in to lunch as usual, and said he would ring when he wanted his pudding. He did ring, but was longer than usual in ringing; that was all. His room was the back-room of the house on the ground-floor; the landlady lives in front. Quite a short time ago it was the other way about, and he suggested the alteration. He also made her promise to keep the blinds down in the kitchen, and the windows shut, to keep out the flies and the sun in the heat of the day; he could make her do what he liked. Now listen. The bank garden adjoins his landlady's garden. I found soil on his window-sill, soil on the woodwork. This was in the afternoon when the excitement was at its height; he was in the bank. I came away, making the woman promise not to say a word; but she broke her promise that night, and that was what started the hue and cry. Meanwhile I wrote him a note telling him I knew all, refusing to see him, but solemnly undertaking that if he would put a note where he had once put other notes (because my mother never liked him), and say in it where the money was, nobody should ever know from me that he had touched it. Remember, Mr Bower, I was once fond of him; nay, you did much as I did yourself; you will understand. He has told me all that has passed between you; how he gave you the note to put in the tennis pavilion. And what do you think he said in it? That if I would come to the beach at ten last night he would tell me where the money was. He did tell me. He told me it was sunk among the rocks at Queenscliff. He told me he was escaping in the *Mollyhawk*—this vessel—but he would land me at Queenscliff, and show me where the place was; because he meant to take the gold, but the notes he dare not. It was the notes that mattered to my father and the bank. They were nine-tenths of the stolen sum. Oh, I know I was a fool to believe or listen to a word he said; I should have had him put in prison at the first. But I am punished as I deserve; they will never forgive me at home; it will break their hearts—they will never get over it. And here I am—and here I am!

She broke down, breathless, and I glanced towards the door. Deedes stood there in my ducks, his face the blacker by contrast; he glared at me, and his evil mouth worked spasmodically; but now more than ever I seemed to discern some foreign trouble in his blazing eyes; and instead of ordering me out of the deck-house, he slammed the door upon us both. Ethel P'Anson whipped her face from her hands.

'That's all right,' said I. 'He's seen us, and he doesn't care. There's something else upon his nerves; when thieves fall out, you know—perhaps they've done so already. I feel hopeful; it's bound to come. There's just one thing I don't size down. I know why I am here; he wouldn't kill me, and alive on land

I'd never have let him clear the Heads. That's why I am here; but why are you? You didn't know about the schooner?'

'No, but—how can I tell you?'

'Don't,' said I, for she was clearly in a new distress.

'I must! He wants to marry me—so he says. He never wanted before. But I did not betray him. I have saved him—he will have it so—so I am to be his wife! Oh, Mr Bower, it is the worst insult of all! I told him so, just before you came in.'

'Then that was the trouble,' said I. 'It rather disappoints me; I am counting on a row between those two. But it will come. Cheer up, Miss P'Anson; let him leave me out of irons twenty-four hours longer, and I'll play a hand myself—for you and the bank!'

And so I talked, trying with all my might to comfort this sweet child in her extremity. She was little more; nineteen, she told me. There were elder sisters married, and a brother gone home to Cambridge. He would have to leave there now; and who would pay his passage back to Melbourne? The robbery seemed to spell certain ruin to the P'Ansons, at all events in their own belief; but now at least we knew who had drawn the cartridges from the bank revolver; and I fancied they all exaggerated the element of personal responsibility. I did my best to reassure Miss Ethel upon the point; nor did I leave a comfortable word unsaid that I could think of; and noon, and afternoon, found us talking still across the cuddy table. Luncheon in this pirate's craft was evidently a movable feast, to-day indefinitely postponed. Ethel looked at her watch and found it after three o'clock; we had thought it one; but about half-past three the house door was flung open and in strode Deedes. He did not look at us, but snatched a repeating-rifle out of a locker, and would have gone without a word but for Ethel P'Anson.

The girl was terrified. 'What are you going to do with it?' she cried; and he paused in the doorway, filling it with his broad shoulders, so that I could see nothing but blue sky without.

'There's a big bird in our wake—another mollyhawk!' said Deedes, as I thought with a lighter look. 'I'm going to have pots at it. That's all.'

'Cruel always,' said the girl, as we heard shot after shot in quick succession. But I went to the door, and then turned back as if with an altered mind. I had found it locked.

Ere I could regain my seat, a new thing happened. A bullet came clean through the deck-house, passed over Ethel's head, and must have abode in my brain had I sat a minute longer where I had been sitting for hours.

'Coward!' gasped the girl; but only with her word came the report.

'The chase!' I shouted. 'Down on the floor with you—flat down—that was a Government bullet!' And on the cabin floor we crouched.

Voices hailing us were now plainly audible. But Deedes vouchsafed no answer, save with

his Winchester, and from the spitting of a revolver (doubtless handled by the captain) I gathered we were at pretty close quarters. So the chase had been going on for hours; that was why we two in the house had been left undisturbed and dinnerless; but what amazed me most was the evident good discipline on deck. We must stand some chance; my soul sickened at the thought. It must be canvas that was after us, not steam; but I could not look out to see; my brave comrade would only remain where she was on condition I did the same. Lastly, every man aboard the schooner, myself excepted, must centre his hopes, perhaps his designs, upon the nineteen thousand and odd pounds that lay snug somewhere between her keelson and her trucks.

I have done livelier things than lie there listening to the shots; many more had struck the house, and even where we lay there was no superfluous safety; but my comrade bore herself throughout with incredible spirit, and made besides a sweet, strange picture, there on that matted floor. The sun streamed in through the skylight, and the schooner's motion was such that the girl's face was now bathed in the rays and anon lighted only by its own radiance. I did not know how I liked it best; nor do I to this day, although I see her always as I saw her then. Her blue eyes bent on mine the kind of look with which a man might aspire to meet his death. Her very hand was cool.

The firing on both sides continued intermittently; but once we heard a very heavy thud upon our own deck, and the revolver spat no more.

'That's not Deedes,' said I, shaking my head. 'I only wish it was.'

'Don't say that,' my comrade answered; 'it would be too dreadful! He is not fit to die; he has fine qualities—you know it yourself—and could play a man's part yet in the world.' Even as she spoke the door was unlocked, flung open, and Deedes himself stood looking down upon us across his folded arms. I dare say we cut an ignominious figure enough, crouching there upon the cabin floor. Deedes looked very sick and pale, but the sight of us elicited a sardonic smile.

'Get up,' said he. 'There will be no more fighting. Watson's stiff. I've struck my flag. Your father will be aboard in a minute, Ethel.'

'My father!'

'Yes,' said Deedes, leaning back against a bulkhead, with his arms still folded. 'It's a pilot's cutter—the first thing handy, I suppose—with the police and your father aboard her. One word before he comes. Once you'd have come fast enough to my arms. Ethel—I'm done for—come to them now!'

He unfolded and flung them wide as he spoke; a great look lit his face, half mocking, half sublime; and down my duck jacket, where his arms had been, a dark stream trickled to the deck. Before I could get to him he fell in a white heap under our eyes.

Deedes was dead. Watson was dead. Two constables in the cutter were badly hit; and

with their ghastly burden the little ships tacked home in consort to Port Philip Heads.

It was midnight when we saw the lights. The bank-manager and I stood together on the cutter's deck, he with a brace of heavy bags between his heels. His daughter was down below, but the thought of her troubled him still. As he said, the money was the bank's, and it was safe; but his daughter was his own, and this scandal would attach for ever to her name. I denied it hotly, but the old man would have it so.

'Don't tell me,' he grumbled. 'I know the world, and my daughter will step ashore with something unpleasantly like a slur upon her name.'

'Then it won't be for long,' I at last retorted. 'I meant it to keep until we got there; but with your permission, sir, Ethel will step ashore my affianced wife!'

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE constant increase of traffic on the river Thames has long called for more adequate provision for steamers of the greatest draught, and a committee was some time ago appointed by the Board of Trade to consider the whole question. In the meantime the Thames conservancy prepared a scheme having the same object in view, which recommends that a navigable channel should be formed in the river, gradually increasing in width and depth from London Bridge to the Nore. At the bridge this channel would have a minimum width of two hundred feet and a depth of eighteen feet, while at the mouth of the river this would be increased to a minimum width of six hundred feet with a depth of twenty-four feet. As in most enterprises, there are conflicting interests to be dealt with. On the one hand the big ship companies ask for a channel of sufficient depth to accommodate their vessels at all tides, and on the other hand the owners of river-side property assert that such deepening of the river would injure its banks. It is noteworthy that a recent survey of the waterway from the Nore to the London docks has shown that the navigable channels of the Thames are quite two feet deeper than they have been commonly supposed to be.

The movement in favour of horseless carriages has recently taken a definite form. A meeting was held in London on the 10th of December to form 'The Self-propelled Traffic Association.' Sir David Salomons, who presided over a large meeting, strongly urged the necessity for a change in the law regarding vehicles propelled by mechanical power. He stated that this association would have for its objects the encouragement of a new industry, which he was certain would soon be an important one, and he also thought that in the interests of the owners of horseless carriages it was necessary for such an association to be formed. A large number of speakers took part in the discussion which followed Sir David's remarks. Amongst them, Mr Symington from Glasgow, who was one of the few representatives from Scotland, deprecated

any show of aggressiveness on the part of the association, and thought that a policy of conciliation should be adopted which would satisfy the public that their interests were being properly safeguarded. He also urged that if this movement was to be the benefit to agriculture which those interested claimed, the limit of weight of carriages on the roads should be increased. Other speakers were also of opinion that the limit of two tons provided by the bill introduced into Parliament last year was much too low. Lord Kelvin and Mr Shaw-Lefevre were proposed as honorary members, and a representative council was formed to constitute the association. Mr G. Johnston, a Glasgow engineer, is devoting considerable attention to the subject. His oil-motor for tramways has been commended by Sir William Arrol, while his horseless carriage exhibits several useful improvements over the French models. A machine was exhibited at the Crystal Palace in December, showing many improvements, the cost of which was £180. We understand that an exhibition of horseless carriages will be held at the Crystal Palace in the spring. A road competition is also announced for the autumn, with prizes amounting to about one thousand guineas.

We lately had the opportunity of seeing one of these new motors, which seems to have a wide future before it. It is known as the Kane-Pemberton Motor, and is being manufactured by the Racine Hardware Company of Wisconsin, but we understand that an English company has also been formed to work the patent. The engine which we saw, and handled, weighs twenty pounds, and will develop, we are told, two horse-power. It is driven by petroleum vapour which is ignited by an electric spark. The particular engine which we examined was designed for cycling, but it is evident that it can be applied to many other purposes where power is required. It is remarkably simple in construction, is not likely to get out of order, and as it will consume any kind of light oil, it can be run at very small cost.

For a long time it has been a crying evil that our railway stations are so thickly covered with advertisements that it is extremely difficult to discover, amid the maze of lettering, the name of the station itself. The Board of Trade has at last written to managers of the railway companies pointing out that the complaints on the subject are very numerous, but as yet nothing has been done to remedy the evil. Lord Grimthorpe has in the meantime made the useful suggestion that the companies should be compelled by law to exhibit the name of each station, in duplicate, on boards placed at right angles so that the passengers in a train, approaching the platform from either direction, could easily see for themselves at what station the train was about to stop. Another good suggestion is that advertisers should be debarred from using red in their trade announcements, and that this colour should be reserved for the background upon which the white letters of the station name should appear. It appears to us that the two suggestions might be combined with the greatest advantage to the travelling public.

A new method of mural painting formed the subject of a paper recently read before the Society of Arts by Professor Roberts-Austen, who with Mrs Lea Merrit had made exhaustive experiments concerning it. The process consists in using a soluble silicate as a vehicle for the application of the colours, which are chiefly represented by metallic oxides and may be regarded as an improvement upon the system adopted by Maclise in the execution of his well-known mural pictures in the Houses of Parliament. As pointed out by Mr Holman Hunt, who was chairman for the evening, these two works, 'The Meeting of Blucher and Wellington' and 'The Death of Nelson,' deserve great attention, because, though changes had occurred in consequence of chemical action upon certain colours, as a whole they had stood very well. Professor Roberts-Austen spoke well of the new process, and said that as a chemist he believed that the work would be durable, but he could not say that the metropolitan atmosphere would not have a mellowing effect upon the colours employed.

One of the most interesting departments in that marvellous depository of treasures known as the British Museum, is that in which are stored the manuscript letters of eminent men and women. The crowds which throng the museum at holiday time are always attracted to the cases where a few of these original letters are exhibited, and it was a happy idea of the authorities to reproduce at a low price, as has recently been done by the potent aid of the photographic camera, a number of these records of the handwriting of those who have been famous. In the publication to which we refer, which we trust is the first of a series, we have specimens of the handwriting of Queen Elizabeth, Mary Stuart, Cromwell, George Washington, Nelson, and Wellington, while literature is represented by Dryden, Addison, Wordsworth, Keats, Dickens, and Carlyle. Autograph collection has long been a recognised hobby, but this collection of fac-simile letters from those who have helped to make history, carries with it, for thoughtful men and women, far greater interest than mere signatures. The work has been well carried out, and will doubtless be much appreciated by readers and students all the world over.

An interesting paper upon 'The Use and Abuse of Explosives' was read last month at the Camera Club, London, by Captain J. Thomson, R.A., one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Explosives. From this paper we learn that there are now known to chemists more than one thousand different explosive bodies and mixtures, although only two dozen could be named thirty years ago. The sudden advance is due in great measure to the knowledge gained as to the nature of an explosive, and the recognition of the fact that an explosion meant really rapid combustion. In the course of his remarks upon smokeless explosives, the lecturer mentioned that cordite had withstood 'the tropic heat of India, the arctic cold of Canada, and the thunders of a chancery suit.' In the discussion which followed the reading of the paper, it was asserted by Captain Nathan that the results of trials showed that cordite, if

accidently ignited, was not a very dangerous explosive, and was certainly free from the perils which had to be faced in dealing with explosives of the gunpowder class.

A week after the reading of the paper above referred to, Captain W. H. Jaques, late of the United States Navy, lectured at the Royal United Service Institution upon a kindred subject—namely, the production of modern war material in America, and it is interesting to see in what way our military authorities differ in their views from our transatlantic cousins. Since 1884 the Americans have made wonderful strides in the development of war material, and more especially in the manufacture of built-up ordnance and armour-plates. They are also expert in the production of armour-piercing projectiles, and a formidable modern weapon of offence is the 'semi-armour piercer,' which consists of a shell of hardened steel with a bursting charge. 'In the United States,' said the lecturer, 'they were still quite at sea as far as powder was concerned. Some of the leading makers had expended small fortunes in experiments with "high" explosives, but the navy department seemed to have such a dread of any explosive into which nitroglycerine entered as a constituent, that practically their use was prohibited. There was, however, one American smokeless powder which gave promise of being valuable, and it was known as the Maxim-Schupphaus. The advantage claimed for this explosive over cordite and others is its low temperature of combustion, which would tend to reduce erosion of the bore of the gun to the minimum, and the small proportion of nitroglycerine which it contained.'

'A country doctor,' a practitioner of long standing and an ardent cricketer, writes to the *Times* to ventilate a grievance which is of the greatest importance to those interested in the national pastime. He has noticed that of late years severe bruises and fractures caused by the impact of cricket balls have increased in frequency, and in looking for the cause he cannot find it in the undue development of fast bowling, or in the natural increase in the number of players. He attributes it to the use of bad material in the ball itself. A patient of his whose rib was broken by a blow on the cricket field, sent the offending projectile to a well-known professional cricketer for examination, and that gentleman reported that he had examined a great many balls, but this particular one was the worst he had ever seen; it was positively dangerous to use such a ball. Of course, 'cheap and nasty' goods will be manufactured as long as there are persons shortsighted enough to buy them, but cricketers have the remedy in their own hands in dealing only with reputable makers. As 'a country doctor' remarks, 'the longer life of a good ball, and the decrease in the number of injuries, would more than compensate for the slight additional price.'

We are sorry to record the fact that the Davis Straits whale-fishing has this last season proved a complete failure owing to the immense quantities of ice obstructing the ships and preventing them getting to the proper fishing-grounds. Only three whales were captured,

although five vessels were employed in the enterprise. Last year the same five ships—the *Terra Nova*, *Eclipse*, *Nova Zembla*, *Esquimaux*, and *Bahena* secured fifteen whales. In the recent expedition the crews of the two last-named vessels occupied themselves in hunting the white whale, and secured one hundred and ninety tons of white whale oil. The Greenland whaling expedition has a better record, the two vessels engaged having killed between them eleven large whales. Nine of these were secured by the *Activa*, and this is the biggest catch recorded of any Greenland whaler for the past ten years.

A member of the Institution of Civil Engineers has published some details with regard to foreign made ironwork, which are not pleasant reading for those who have the interests of this country at heart. We are told that at the present time we not only purchase girder and other iron abroad cheaper than we can produce it, but that we are being undersold in all foreign markets. Most contracts are being executed here without profit to the manufacturer, in order to keep the works going and in hope of better times ahead. In two shipbuilding yards the turned steel shafting for ships in progress is being supplied from Germany at three pounds per ton less than it can be procured in our own country. German tires for locomotives are being used here for the same reason. According to the opinion of the authority from whom we quote, trades unions and the agitation for an eight hours' day have so hampered our manufacturers that the foreigner has been able to compete with us in those branches of trade in which we once took the lead of all. He believes that we shall not see a revival of prosperous trade until men are willing to work ten hours a day for a fair wage; for their masters, however long suffering, cannot go on working and receiving no profit for ever.

According to a return published by the French Alpine Club, there were during the past year eighteen fatal accidents to climbers on the French, Swiss, and Italian Alps. These fatalities do not include accidents to those reckless persons who in quest of edelweiss and birds' nests often come to grief lower down the mountain slopes through their own imprudence, for they cannot be fairly classed as mountaineers. Of the accidents named, four persons lost their lives in the French Alps, six on the Swiss Alps, of whom four were British (Messrs Cohen and Benecke, Mr Ayre, and Miss Sampson). Six deaths occurred on the German and Austrian Alps, and two on the Italian Alps.

As surely as the damp still air of winter comes upon us, so surely do the fogs come with it, and the usual agitation about smoke prevention arises in our towns and cities. Of the many ideas which have been patented to combat the smoke fiend, none seems so promising as that which was tried at the end of November at the mills of Messrs J. and R. Snodgrass, Washington Street, Glasgow. The principal feature of the new invention is the furnace door, which is so constructed that the air in passing through passages in it delays the smoke in its progress towards the flue, until the

proper admixture of air has taken place. In the trial referred to, the furnaces were stoked twice, first with the ordinary door in position, and afterwards with the patent door. In the former case the chimney-stack belched forth black smoke for twelve minutes, and in the latter case no smoke at all was apparent. A still more conclusive test followed. The patent door after it had been in position for ten minutes was removed, and the ordinary door substituted for it, with the result that black smoke immediately made its appearance at the stack head. It is claimed for the invention that while smoke is utterly consumed, there is a saving in coal and an increase in the production of steam.

According to Dr Günther, 'Among the salmonoids of the Pacific with which we are acquainted at present, the quinnat carries easily off the palm with regard to size, abundance, flavour of flesh, and economic importance generally,' and in a paper on the chief characteristics of this useful fish, which lately appeared in the *Field*, he tells of a scheme to import frozen quinnat into Europe from the far-off western shores of North America. At the time of writing, fifty tons were in the London market ready for consumption, and arrangements had been made for monthly instalments of double that quantity. The table qualities of the frozen fish are stated to be of the highest, although they were killed months ago and sent to London *via* Australia, a distance of about twenty-two thousand miles. It is the cost of this immense journey that seems to stand in the way of an enterprise which is so important from an economic point of view. Some years ago, Mr Henry Ffennell tells us frozen fish from North America or Canada found a ready sale in London at one shilling and sixpence per pound; but even this comparatively high price did not cover the cost of carriage, and the importation was abandoned. We trust that the new scheme will not share the same fate.

'Exploration in the Japanese Alps' was the title of a lecture recently given by the Rev. Walter Weston before the Royal Geographical Society. In these mountains, wherever a hot spring occurred, the natives resorted to them, either on account of their supposed curative properties, or simply to kill time. This taste for bathing seems almost to amount to a vice, and in one place known to the lecturer a man would stay in the water for practically a month at a time, taking the precaution to place a heavy stone on his knees to keep him from floating or turning over in his sleep. The caretaker of the same bath, an old man of seventy stayed in the water the whole winter through.

Quite a revolution in horticulture has been in progress during the past decade, although owing to the secret manner in which the experiments leading up to it have been conducted, comparatively few persons have been aware of the new departure. Every one knows that flowers, as well as fruits and vegetables, are forced so that those who are rich shall have the use of them before unaided nature brings them to maturity. This forcing business is an expensive one, requiring constant attention and

skilled labour. Many attempts therefore have been made to get at the golden eggs by cheaper means, and as a result of many trials the opposite process to forcing has been adopted with success. The system consists in retarding the flowering of the plant by refrigeration, and is, of course, only applicable to those which are hardy in this country, by which we mean those which will stand several degrees of frost. The lily of the valley is one of them, and it is much in request for purposes of decoration. Under the old forcing conditions only about fifty per cent. of the buds treated could be induced to flower, but by the freezing method an average of ninety-five per cent. can be secured from the end of summer up to Christmas. It will be noted that the process cannot be applied to evergreens of any kind, and it would certainly be death to camellias, and probably to hyacinths and tulips. It is said that near Berlin three growers alone have nearly three hundred acres of lily of the valley under cultivation, and that they have adopted the refrigerating method with great success. It has been long ago proved that the plant can be cultivated in England with equal success, and we trust that the new method will soon be tried on an extensive scale in this country.

'WHERE THE TREASURE IS.'

VERY nearly a quarter of a century ago, I was on terms of considerable intimacy with an officer of the English police, who at this hour fills a position of high trust at Scotland Yard. At the time of which I write he was a sergeant in the force of a great provincial city: smart, alert, ambitious, and resolute to get on. He and I were in one or two big things together. I had got wind of a gang of Russian forgers, on one occasion, and was playing detective on my own account, when the sergeant received instructions to watch the same gang. We met, understood each other, and combined our forces. My silence, as a journalist, purchased his, as an officer; and when at last we bagged our men we each had 'an exclusive.' We were engaged together in conniving at the escape of as thorough-paced a swindler as might have been found in the British dominions. There was a reason for this connivance which may some day make the story worth telling. I lent the sergeant an informal aid and countenance in the capture of a desperate defrauder in his bedroom at the Queen's Hotel, and narrowly escaped being shot for my pains. When I went prowling about the slums of that great provincial city, as I did pretty often, the sergeant was my frequent companion. And when at last he gained his heart's desire, and was promoted to London, I was the only person in whom he confided the fact that the capture which secured his promotion was due to chance.

I have never made notes of these matters, and the names of the people concerned in this adventure have long since slipped my memory, but the facts are clear enough.

In the year 1871, and long before and after, a manufacturing jeweller, in a large way of business, kept shop in St Paul's Churchyard,

on the right hand side as you go westward. The common kind of work was done at Birmingham; the better and more valuable jewellery was the product of skilled hands employed in a small workshop in Clerkenwell. The private clientèle of the house was small, but the business transacted with 'the trade' was probably as large as any in London. Only one commercial traveller was engaged, a Jewish gentleman, a man of exemplary character and charming manners; a linguist, a musician, a judge of pictures, a painter *en amateur*, and a finished expert in precious stones. He had been seventeen years in this same service, and his employer's trust in him was absolute. He drew a liberal commission, kept his own little family in solid comfort at his Brixton home, was a pillar of his synagogue, a pearl among commercial travellers, and deservedly respected. I never saw this gentleman, but I can draw his portrait, and before I close this story I will tell you why. He had large dark eyes, which shone out of a sort of velvety dull softness, as a black-heart cherry shines when dew or rain is on it. He had a well-shapen aquiline nose, and an olive skin. His lips were shapely, but redder and fuller than is common with men of western type. He wore his hair cut short, and his beard was trimmed Vandyke fashion. The notable thing about him was that hair, eyebrows, and beard were of a deep ruddy auburn, a colour handsome in itself, but a little startling and bizarre in a man of his complexion.

In the year 1870, whilst the sergeant and I, unwitting of this gentleman's existence, were hanging on the skirts of the Russian forgers, the commercial traveller had submitted a scheme to his employer. He had employed his taste and leisure in the preparation of a number of designs for brooches, bracelets, rings, tiaras, necklets, and pendants, and he had designed and drawn with beautiful delicacy a case in which to display them. He estimated the cost of the preparation of this tray at about twenty thousand pounds sterling, and his proposal was that the real tray to be manufactured from his designs should be kept in the show-case at St Paul's Churchyard, whilst he should carry round with him a tray of paste and pinchbeck in illustration of style and colour.

Both trays were made. The real thing went into the show-case, and the bogus article went on tour. The real tray was paragraphed in the London and provincial newspapers, hundreds of fashionable people went to see it, orders came in briskly, the new designs became a fashion, and the clever little Hebrew gentleman made so good a thing of his liberal commission that he was more than paid for all his trouble. His employer was of course eminently satisfied on his own account, but by-and-by disaster crept upon him.

The traveller made four journeys a year, covering the three kingdoms on each expedition. He had started on the third round since the completion of the two trays, when the jeweller by a chance examination of his treasure discovered that he was in possession of the imitation, and that his servant had, by some queer blunder, walked off with the real thing.

To an unlearned eye the mimic jewels were exactly like the real, but an expert was not to be deceived for an instant. The two trays had been set for comparison side by side outside the show-case, and the traveller had made an accidental exchange. It was a little surprising, but it excited no suspicion. The jeweller sent a special messenger down to Brixton with a note of explanation, and the special messenger came back to say that the gentleman had gone to Birmingham. A telegram was sent to Birmingham, and the jeweller went to his home in the suburbs quite contented and at ease. When a servant has been faithful for seventeen years in things big and little, when he has had hundreds and hundreds of thousands of pounds through his hands, and has never once been out in his accounts by a farthing, an honest man is not likely to grow mistrust from so small a seed as this. But when no answer came from Birmingham—when telegraphic inquiry elicited the fact that the traveller had not been to his customary hotel—when further inquiry proved that he had not been heard of at Manchester, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Glasgow—when after four or five days, his wife, for the first time since her marriage, was ignorant of his whereabouts—then things began to grow uncomfortable, and suspicion began to peer. Not at all in the direction of the dapper little Jewish gentleman. He was above suspicion, as the wife of Cæsar should have been. Seventeen years of unstained fidelity were not to be rewarded so. But it became clear that some mischief had befallen him—there are hundreds of people in the world who would do murder for the fiftieth part of such a booty as he carried. His employer went mournfully to the police and offered a reward for the missing man's discovery. He was angry at the mere idea that one whom he had trusted so entirely, and whose faithfulness had stood the test so long, had at last deceived and robbed him. The honest heart would have no commerce with that fancy. No! The poor fellow had fallen ill, had tumbled into some aberration of the mind, of which the changing of the trays was the earliest sign, had been robbed, drugged, spirited away, murdered.

The police accepted this view of the case with courteous incredulity, and planned and laboured on their own lines. They networked the country through the telegraph; they woke up every port in Great Britain, and had every passenger list examined; they haunted way-side stations, and shadowed the great termini; they sent the news tingling to every country in Europe and to the United States. Every pawn-broker in Great Britain, every *mont de piété* in France, every dealer in precious stones and precious metals everywhere had warning.

Then, as his own lucky star ordained, the sergeant was sent to London on professional affairs. He called at Scotland Yard to pay a visit of respect to an old provincial superior of his own; partly because a little civility is never wasted—'as you know, Mr Murray'—partly because he liked the gentleman in question, and partly because 'out of sight is out of mind with many people.' The late provincial superior was affable to the extent of

a glass of whisky and a cigar; and, at their parting, he confided to the sergeant's charge a packet of handbills, which set forth a portrait of the missing gentleman, a full description of his person, and an inventory of the lost jewels. The sergeant kept one of these for his own private reading, packed the rest in his hand-bag, and having finished his business by noon on the day following, strolled down to Euston Station in time for the two o'clock train.

On the way he encountered an old friend, with whom he had a glass of whisky. At the station he encountered another old friend—one of the detectives on constant duty there—and with him he had another glass of whisky. The day was warm and heavy, the sergeant had been seeing 'Life' in the capital at the expense of his nightly rest, and ensconcing himself in one corner of a second-class smoking compartment, five minutes before the train's departure he fell asleep. At Chalk Farm he was dimly aware that somebody got into the carriage, and then he slept again. He was half-way to Rugby before he awoke. His fellow-passenger was seated in the opposite corner at the far-end of the compartment, and the sergeant surveyed him uninterestedly through scarce-opened eyelids. It was a Jewish gentleman of a neat and dapper aspect, with coal-black hair, eyebrows, and moustache, and cheeks and chin clean shaven. He smoked a cigar, and read a railway novel, but every now and then he seemed to awake to a sudden interest in a hat-box which was bestowed in the luggage netting over head, and at such moments he would screw himself round and look upward, as if he feared to find it spirited away.

'Now,' said the sergeant in telling me the story, 'it's a curious thing, but this is what set me a-thinking. When I was a kid, and right on to when I left home, my old mother never let me get to bed without reading a chapter out of the Bible at me. I never got a lot o' good out of it, as far as I remember, but I never got no harm anyway. I hadn't thought of the words for the best part of fifteen years, but when that chap had looked at that hat-box maybe a dozen times, they came into my head as plain as if a person had spoke 'em in my ear. "Where the treasure is, there will the heart be also." And "What have you got there, my friend?" I says to myself; "I wonder." By-and-by the sergeant had something else to wonder at. The Jewish gentleman drew off a well-fitting glove of tan-coloured dogskin, and began to finger his cheeks and chin with a very delicate carefulness. His face took a cast of anxiety, and he drew from his breast-pocket a small morocco case which contained a comb and a mirror. He combed his moustache, and scrutinised it with extraordinary care. He combed the hair on his forehead and temples, and scrutinised that with extraordinary care. Then he combed his thick black eyebrows, and peered at them into the mirror as closely as if he had been examining them through a microscope. Next he examined his chin minutely and seemed dissatisfied. Once or twice he looked at the sergeant, who lay with his legs stretched out, and the merest hair's-breadth slit of watchful eye quite veiled

by the eyelash. And, occupied earnestly as he was in these singular details, the dapper Jewish gentleman never forgot the hat-box for much more than half a minute at a time.

'Where the treasure is,' said the sergeant, with his heart beating like a hammer at his ribs, for he had begun to think what an uncommonly close shave a dark-haired gentleman like that must have taken, to be sure, to have no sign at all of a beard on cheek and chin. 'For a man as is naturally black,' said the observant sergeant, 'gets blue with close shaving, don't you notice, sir? and this chap wasn't a bit bluer on the chin, than he was on the bridge of his nose. Dyed his hair—he had!'

It occurred to the sergeant to wake up and light a pipe, and assume a brisk interest in the landscape. It occurred to him further to cross to the other end of the compartment for a better view of the landscape on that side. He ventured to remark that it was a pretty country, and that the young wheat was looking well. Then he sauntered back to his own corner, and made believe to doze again—with his heart beating more and more like a hammer at his ribs, until he wondered that the other man didn't seem to hear it. For at that nearer view he had seen what he had fully expected to see—an auburn rime on cheek and chin, namely, and a touch of auburn at the roots of the carefully pencilled eyelashes. And all the while he was thinking, so he told me: 'What a stroke of luck! Oh! what a stroke of luck! And here's my step at last.' And yet he had no authority to act, and to arrest a man on such a mere suspicion, and without authority, was a dangerous sort of thing to do. The sergeant was mightily tumbled up and down in his mind, and knew not what to do.

They came to Rugby, and the gentleman got out and ordered a glass of milk and soda at the refreshment bar. Before it was served, he bolted back to the train, and secured his hat-box. 'Now, is he going to slip off here?' asked the sergeant within-doors, 'and if he is, what's my game?' The gentleman went back to the carriage, however, in due season, and the sergeant followed. At Birmingham they both alighted, and the gentleman went to the Queen's Hotel. He chartered a bedroom there, and carried his hat-box up-stairs with his own hands, a porter following with a portmanteau. In half an hour he came down again, passed into Stevenson Square and on into New Street.

The sergeant took his courage in both hands, and went to the manager. A Jewish gentleman with a black moustache had taken such and such a number?

'Yes.'

'That,' said the sergeant, producing his hand-bill, 'is the man.'

The manager stared, and then laughed. No, he knew that man. He was a red-headed fellow with a red beard and moustache.

'Shaved and dyed,' said the sergeant.

'Begad!' said the manager. 'I believe you're right.'

'You know me?' says the sergeant.

'Yes,' says the manager naming him.

'Very well. I take all the responsibility of this move. That man has the stolen jewels in

his hat-box. Let me into his room, and we'll soon see.'

'It was a common lock to the hat-box,' said the sergeant, concluding his story in great excitement. 'I begged a hair-pin from a chamber-maid—one o' them thick strong hair-pins, and the trick was done in a minute. There was the violet-velvet lining of the jewel-case all tore out loose, and rolled into a bundle, and inside it was the whole twenty thousand pounds' worth. And while we was a-staring at each other, like a pair of stuck pigs, back comes his Nibs, sees me a-kneeling over the open hat-box, whips out a revolver, and knocks a hole clean through two sides of my new silk hat, and ruins it. Twelve-and-six it cost me, and brand-new out of Hyams's shop only the week afore. The manager knocks his arm up, and the next shot goes into the ceiling. It was nip and tuck then for a minute, but we got him down, and I had 'em on his wrists in a jiffy. Seven years he got at the Old Bailey, and pretty cheap at that. Five hundred pounds reward is a good deal to a poor man like me, but a London chance is more, and that slice o' luck brought both. That's his Nibs's portrait; that there big coloured photograph over the mantelshelf. His missis sold up the little house at Brixton, and I bought that at the sale for a reminder of him.'

A CURIOUS CRAFT.

THE summer of last year witnessed the launch and successful inauguration of a craft which may safely be affirmed to be a complete novelty. Half locomotive and half steamship, it combines the dual power of travelling on land or water automatically, and presents generally so many features of interest as to warrant some notice.

Some dozen miles or so from Copenhagen, two large lakes, the Fure Sø and the Farum Sø, are divided by a narrow stretch of land about four hundred yards in width. The problem to which the inventor of the 'amphibious' boat addressed himself, was the construction of a vessel capable of navigating the lakes, and of transferring herself from lake to lake without aid other than that of her own machinery.

The craft, constructed in Sweden by Mr Ljunggren of Christianstad for Lector C. J. Magrell of Boras, the inventor, has a length of forty-six feet with nine feet six inches beam, the draft varying from three feet to three feet six inches. The weight, when empty, is eleven and a half tons; and when loaded with seventy passengers, her full complement, fifteen tons. The vessel is of the flat-bottomed type, and full both fore and aft; the engines, which are twenty-seven indicated horse-power, being adjusted to work both the screw at the stern, and a pair of ordinary railway wheels on an axle at the bow. A similar pair of wheels are at the stern, but are not actuated by the engine.

The gauge of the railway crossing the strip of land is four feet two inches; rails of the customary Danish type being laid down. At each end of the little line a harbour is formed, tapering outwards. The 'amphibious' vessel, on entering the wedge-shaped dock, is brought

directly over the rails, and the bow wheels being set in motion, at once leaves the water, and commences to ascend the line, which has an easy gradient of one in fifty. On crossing the summit the brake is applied, if necessary; and descending the incline the novel craft launches itself, taking to the water like a duck.

No less than six overland trips have been made daily during the past summer, and as some twenty thousand passengers have been safely carried by the *Svanen*, it may be assumed with confidence that the novel craft has proved herself equal to her curious task. The owners announce the venture to have been a commercial success, and it is understood that they purpose traversing another isthmus—namely, extending their operations to a third lake, during the forthcoming year. The engineer of the undertaking has pointed out what possibilities lie in the extension of the system here described, and our readers will readily grasp the advantages to be derived in many localities where rapids, &c. intervene, and where the employment of a craft equally at home on land or water would be an inestimable boon; whilst, as the engineer in describing this novel departure in locomotive and boat building justly remarks, 'the employment of such boats, if practical, would undoubtedly obviate the expense and delay of transhipment of cargo.'

At a time when the Chignecto Ship-railway is yet uncompleted, and the still larger Tehuantepec Ship-railway for the time being in abeyance, it is interesting, both to the public and the engineering world, to find the principle at issue successfully applied, both in its mechanical details and its financial aspects, on these far-away Danish lakes.

SONNET.

ERE baffled Winter, at fair Spring's first nod,
His weakened forces northward home hath led,
While remnant drifts about our path are spread,
The crocus bursts the bondage of the sod;
And, lo! where late among the snow we trod,
The blossom sunward lifts its dainty head,
White, purple, gold, along the garden bed,
To catch the first warm glances of its god.

Thus, in some gloomy season of the heart,
When sorrow all our joy hath overspread,
And ev'ry voice seems but to make us sad,
New hopes arise ere pain can all depart;
We fling aside the discontent and dread,
And go our way with faces bright and glad.

MORTIMER MANSELL.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed to the 'Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the *writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL*.
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 631.—VOL. XIII. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

THE GIRDLETON GALLERY MYSTERY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'MR MAGSDALE'S COURTSHIP;' 'MRS LAMSHED'S WILL,' &c.

CHAPTER I.

'FIVE thousand pounds reward! Whereas some person or persons unknown did between the hours of 5 P.M. on Saturday, 2d May, and 9 A.M. on Monday, 4th *idem*, with knives or other sharp instruments maliciously cut from the picture, by Raphael Sanzio, known as "The Journey of Tobit," the property of Andrew Girdleton, and exhibited by him in his Gallery of Fine Arts, No. 909A New Bond Street, a portion of said picture measuring fifteen inches by nine inches, or thereabout, whereon is portrayed a dog'—

'Could you say what breed or variety of dog it was?' Mr Lee Boughton paused in his work of drafting the advertisement to ask the question of his client.

'No,' replied Mr Girdleton, 'I never saw a dog quite like it. I expect the breed's extinct.'

'Well, well, perhaps the point is not important,' said his solicitor half grudgingly; for Mr Lee Boughton had been a dog-fancier before he was articulated, and was still a shining light on matters relative to the Irish terrier at meetings of the Kennel Club. 'Perhaps the point isn't vital. Let's see,' glancing back to the paper before him; 'where was I?'

'Portrayed a dog,' suggested Mr Girdleton gloomily; 'also a left foot shod with a brown sandal of antique pattern.'

'Yes,' said Mr Lee Boughton, writing, 'and have stolen and carried away that portion of the picture known as'—

'Is it necessary to have that over again?'

'It is advisable to put it in due legal form.'

'I was thinking of the expense of the advertisement,' sighed Mr Girdleton; 'but go on.'

'Think of the stake at issue, sir!' suggested his solicitor reprovingly. 'As I understand it, the intrinsic value of the work is fifty thousand pounds sterling, and the mutilation renders it'—

'Worth fifty shillings; but pray don't let me hinder you; I must get back to Bond Street.'

Mr Lee Boughton took the hint, grasped his pen again, and hurriedly scribbled off the rest of the advertisement; which was to the effect that the aforesaid sum of five thousand pounds would be paid to any one who discovered, or gave such information as should lead to the discovery and conviction of the malefactor who perpetrated the outrage. Application to be made to Lee Boughton & Phipps, 125 Lincoln's Inn Fields.

'That will do, I think,' he said, after reading aloud what he had written. 'Now, we are to send this for insertion in a prominent place to all the papers on your list.—Why, bless me, Mr Girdleton, you have forgotten to put the *Collegian* on your list of weeklies. Surely'—

'No, I didn't forget it,' said the great dealer grimly; 'the *Collegian* gets none of my money. It was the *Collegian* that tried to cast doubt on the authenticity of the Raphael, questioned the genuineness of the work, and said I'd been imposed upon, if you please!'

'There must have been some personal feeling,' said the solicitor soothingly; 'either that, or it was a disgraceful attempt to make sensational reading at your expense.'

'It was personal animus, I believe,' said Mr Girdleton, rising and drawing on his glove. 'It was once my painful duty to tell Trotter, who does the Old Masters for the *Collegian*, that he was an impostor. That man Trotter, sir, poses

as an authority on every painter contemporary with and prior to Sir Joshua Reynolds.'

'Obviously a charlatan,' said the tactful Mr Lee Boughton. 'Well, this advertisement will sufficiently prove your faith in the genuineness of the work.'

'If paying fifty thousand down in hard cash hasn't proved it,' said the dealer bitterly. 'As if a man of my age and experience were likely to let himself be taken in with a spurious Raphael at that figure.'

'The thing's absurd,' smiled Mr Lee Boughton, tactful and soothing as ever.

'I must go; we shall be pestered to death by the newspaper people for the next week, and I mustn't be away from the place.'

The newspaper people had already begun to pester when Mr Girdleton reached Bond Street. Either the vulture-like instinct which is the gift of all journalists had brought them, or it might have been a type-written circular. Mr Girdleton resigned himself to the ordeal of examination with the best grace in the world. Several brethren of the pencil were present, industriously discussing the sherry and sandwiches which for their delectation replaced the office books on the large side-table in Mr Girdleton's private room.

'Sent for the police yet?' inquired the representative of the *Moon*, after greetings had been exchanged.

Mr Girdleton had sent for a detective. 'Not,' he added, sighing softly, 'that I feel much confidence in the ability of the Scotland Yard people to help me. In such a case, I feel that real aid must come from the Press.'

The youngest reporter dropped his wine-glass in the convulsive snatch he made at an enormous note-book in his breast-pocket; he was new to the business.

'Don't apologise, sir,' cooed Mr Girdleton, pouring out another glass of wine for the abashed youth. 'Mr Waters,' to him of the *Comet*, 'a glass of Madeira before we go into the gallery? I know your time is precious, gentlemen; but if you will join me at lunch, after we have inspected the picture, I shall be able to give you all the information I can without trespassing too much upon your patience.'

The journalists accepted like one man. It is said that if a member of the Institute of Journalists attend any function of whatsoever description whereat refreshments are served, and knowingly refrain from partaking thereof, he is liable to summary expulsion from the Institute. It is not on record that any member has yet been expelled for this offence.

The red rope which ran round the gallery to keep visitors at a respectful distance from the treasures of art upon the walls had, in front of the mutilated Raphael, been carried well out in a semicircle to facilitate inspection, and two policemen stood within the space making heroic endeavours to look important; as grooms might look if set to guard the stable whence the horse has been stolen. Mr Girdleton stepped within the red ropes, beckoned the reporters to follow him, and led the way round to the top of the room, where an increasing throng of shilling visitors was gathered.

'There, gentlemen!' He waved his hand at the picture and blew his nose at the public.

'Girdleton—Mr Girdleton—Mr Andrew Girdleton himself,' murmured the crowd. And ejaculations of 'shameful!' 'wicked!' 'disgraceful!' grew louder and more sympathetic.

The spectacle presented by the famous picture justified the strongest expressions. The central figure was intact save for the left leg, which, cut off above the ankle, seemed pointing mutely to the unsightly gap which yawned against the wooden backing. Mr Waters examined the canvas closely; it had been cut clean, and the absence of ripple or other sign of strain proved that the instrument used had been a sharp one and deftly handled.

'I have instructed my solicitors,' said Mr Girdleton, addressing his patrons outside the rope, 'to offer a reward of five thousand pounds for discovery of the miscreant who did this. I shall spare no effort to bring him to justice.' Then as people began to press forward to express their condolences, he bowed and hastened back to the privacy of his own room, followed by the journalists. Lunch was ready on the side-table, and while his guests ate, Mr Girdleton unfolded his tale, premising that what he could tell would, he feared, throw little light upon the mystery. Last Saturday afternoon at five o'clock the picture was sound; this morning at nine it presented the deplorable aspect they had seen. Two reporters noted 'deplorable aspect,' and Mr Girdleton continued. He was absolutely at a loss to imagine how the scoundrelly vandal (only the youngest reporter noted this) had obtained admission to the gallery. A watchman slept on the premises, and was relieved at eight on Sunday morning by another, who, in his turn, was relieved by the night watchman at eight in the evening. The street door of the gallery—the only entrance—could be opened from the inside, but not from the outside. This arrangement compelled the watchman to remain on the premises, as if he went out and the door closed, he was shut out until Mr Girdleton himself came and opened the door with his master-key. The night watchman could not say whether the picture was all right or not when he went off duty on Sunday morning; nothing had occurred to disturb him during the night, and he did not think of looking. The Sunday man, however, averred that shortly before he was relieved he happened to glance through the glass doors which separated the gallery from the hall, and thought he saw something odd about the picture. The blinds being drawn over the skylights, and the Raphael occupying the place of honour at the top of the room, the man would not be able to see it distinctly. The night porter asserted that he was not disturbed on Sunday night; he admitted the woman whose duty it was to sweep and dust the gallery and offices at eight this morning, and she was the first to discover the mischief. 'And now, gentlemen,' concluded Mr Girdleton, 'you know as much as I do.'

'You have formed no theory of your own about the business?' queried Mr Smart of the *Daily Argus*. 'You don't suspect any one belonging to the place?'

'No. I don't suspect anybody. Welks and

Jackson, the two watchmen, are not likely to have done such a thing. I don't suspect either of them, but as one or other must have been guilty of very grave neglect, I dismissed them summarily this morning, promising, of course, that I would take back the man whom events proved was not in fault.'

'Your own key is the only means of opening the door from the outside?' said the youngest reporter.

'The sole means, and is never for a moment out of my possession.'

'And there is no other possible means of entrance?'

'None, unless we assume that the person came through the skylight with a ladder,' replied Mr Girdleton with a forlorn smile.

'Your clerks are above suspicion?' hazarded Waters, turning a fresh leaf in his notebook.

'The only member of my staff between whom and myself any little difference of opinion has arisen lately, and who, therefore, might have motive for injuring me, is beyond suspicion if only because he was away from town from noon on Saturday till ten this morning. He went down to Staines to spend the week-end with his mother.'

Waters emitted a half-suppressed grunt of recognition.

'You will have a rare show for the next week,' remarked Smart, as he rose and took his hat. 'It seems to have begun.' The gallery hall, indeed, was filled with people crowding to the turnstiles, whose continuous clack betrayed streams of shillings.

'Bad news travels fast,' sighed Mr Girdleton. 'It will be a nine days' wonder, I suppose, but it would need a longer boom than we are likely to have to make up a tenth part of my loss.'

'I am afraid so; but we'll hope the offer of a reward will produce results. Good-bye for the present.'

'What do you make of the affair?' inquired he of the *Daily Argus* of Waters, when, having writhed their way out, they found themselves in Bond Street.

'Special edition and three cols. long primer,' replied Waters, 'nothing less.'

'No, no! I believe you'd bleed printer's ink if I pricked you. I mean what opinion have you formed as to this picture-cutting?'

'Pardon; I didn't follow you. Oh, I don't know what to surmise. One of the watchmen might have done it on the chance of a reward being offered, or Eltham might have done it out of spite.'

'Who is Eltham? I don't know the place as well as you do.'

'Eltham is Girdleton's cashier. It was he who went down to spend Sunday at Staines.'

'Well; go on.'

'Mind, Smart, I'm speaking in confidence now. I myself shan't use what I am telling you, and you must promise not to.'

'Certainly, I promise. Then Eltham is the man with whom Girdleton has lately had a difference of opinion?'

'Yes; Girdleton used to ask Eltham, who is of better social position than the others there,

frequently to his house—where I may remark you get a rattling good dinner—and Eltham lost his heart to Miss Girdleton. That would not have mattered, but Miss Annie lost hers to him; and the upshot of it was they went a couple of weeks ago hand in hand to papa for his blessing. Papa laughed at them and told Eltham he ought to know better.'

'Naturally, Eltham didn't take it well.'

'He gave notice to leave; but Girdleton, who is really a very kindly fellow, talked to him like a father; pointed out that Miss Annie was not eighteen, that Eltham was only two-and-twenty, and three pounds a week was not an income on which a young man ought to marry. He didn't tell him (as he did me) that he had higher views for his daughter. And Eltham was induced to remain on. But the portals of his paradise at St John's Wood are closed against him for the time.'

'I hardly think there's ground for suspicion in that "difference of opinion,"' observed Smart, ruminating; 'it's not as if Girdleton had treated him harshly.'

'I don't suspect Eltham, mind. But I'm inclined to think Eltham hasn't forgiven Girdleton's good-natured contempt of his pretensions. He told me himself that had it not been for the fact that his mother was partially dependent on him he should have thrown up his berth.'

They were passing the National Gallery; both lost in silent speculation, when Smart abruptly stopped and said he was going back to ask Eltham a question or two.

'Ah! Think of having a shy at that five thousand pounds yourself?' laughed Waters.

'Not exactly. It's only in novels that the amateur detective solves the mystery. I want to get hold of those two watchmen, for it seems to me altogether too extraordinary that neither of them should have been disturbed.'

'Well, I wish you luck. I must go on and evolve a theory out of my own inner consciousness; it's past two, and it will take me all my time to get my stuff out.' Thus disrespectfully did Mr Waters speak of those three columns of large type, wherewith the great British public was to be thrilled in a special edition of that evening's *Comet*.

Robert Smart, enjoying the greater freedom of a writer on a morning paper, had more time to investigate. He went back to Bond Street, and met Richard Eltham just as he came in from his afternoon visit to the bank, whither he had been with a heavy load of silver. The cashier was a sturdily built young man with a pleasant open face, who received Smart cordially enough when he introduced himself.

'It's the busiest afternoon we have ever had,' he observed, 'but nothing to what I expect it will be when the papers have ventilated the business. I am awfully busy, as we are going to remain open till seven instead of six, but I can give you ten minutes.'

'I wanted to ask if you would feel at liberty to tell me the addresses of the two watchmen who were dismissed,' said Smart, a little awkwardly.

'Why do you want to see them?' inquired Eltham pointedly, his manner changing.

'Copy,' replied Smart with a shrug.

'Neither could tell you more than he told us.'

'Mr Girdleton did not say very plainly what they did tell you.'

'I was not present when he questioned them; he had them before him in his own room; but practically it amounted to this: neither man had been disturbed.'

'I understand that you would rather not put me in the way of questioning them,' said Smart, after a little more adroit fencing on Eltham's part.

'I'd rather not do so without referring to Mr Girdleton, and he is out at present.'

'Very well, forgive my curiosity; but it's my business to be curious, you know.'

'Quite so,' returned Richard Eltham graciously; 'and you will understand that I can't let my tongue wag in a matter of this kind.'

Smart said he appreciated the position and took his leave somewhat chagrined. No self-respecting writer on the staff of a journal like the *Daily Argus* likes to give an account of so remarkable an incident, without putting forward a theory of some kind, and so far he was at a loss to think of anything plausible enough to be worth print. He was sorry now that he had gone to see Eltham. The young man's demeanour had impressed him so favourably that his sense of justice recoiled from the idea of doing what he had contemplated; which was to point out that ill feeling existed towards Mr Girdleton on the part of an employee who was said to have spent the thirty-six possible hours at Staines; that there were large facilities in the way of late Sunday trains for running up to town from that riverside resort; and that the movements of that employee had not been satisfactorily accounted for.

'I can't do it now,' thought Smart; 'it would be too mean, after trying to pump him. He has character that young Eltham; he is loyal at all events.'

Richard Eltham had been loyal, and would have been so, had the extent of his information afforded opportunity of disloyalty. But even had his sense of duty to his employer not imposed silence upon him, he had another strong motive for refusing to disclose the addresses of the two watchmen to earnest inquirers after truth. He had, in fact, early in the day conceived the idea of trying to probe to the bottom of the mystery himself. The more he thought about it, the more strongly he felt that this was his opportunity. Mr Girdleton had—and he grew hot all over as he remembered it—treated him like a silly schoolboy, and had laughed at his pretensions. Well, supposing that he set to work, and of his own perseverance and acumen traced the person who had mutilated the famous Raphael and brought him triumphantly to justice, his employer's opinion of him would—must—undergo a change. The reward was not of so much account, though properly invested it would make a handsome provision for his widowed mother and relieve him of a heavy responsibility. The particular result of success which presented itself in most attractive colours was

his restoration to Mr Girdleton's private circle, with possibilities to follow of too deliriously delightful a nature to be considered calmly. Richard Eltham warned himself that he was indulging in a dream; but, nevertheless, he locked up the safe that evening with a cheerful conviction that with any luck he might be accepted as his employer's future son-in-law at no very distant date. He took the addresses of the two watchmen from his book, and hurried home to his lodgings in Brixton to get his dinner at once; for he meant to open his detective campaign that same night.

THE NATIONAL DEBT.

It was confidently expected, before the issue of President Cleveland's message, our troubles in the Transvaal, and recent activity in the Navy, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would, at the close of the financial year, have one of the biggest surpluses on record. Available surplus it could hardly be called, because after the 31st of March it could only be applied to the reduction of the National Debt. Should the war-scare not have altered matters, there might be an unexpected drop of something like five millions sterling in the capital sum of British consols. Whether this should really be the case or not, it may not be uninteresting to know something about where all the money they represent originally went to.

Compared with most English institutions—for we can hardly use the word British to anything dating beyond the eighteenth century—the National Debt is quite modern. Kings and governments have always shown a propensity for borrowing, but until about two centuries ago, whenever the debts were not repudiated, they had sooner or later to be liquidated out of current revenue. Had it been otherwise, we should have heard less of the illegal taxation imposed by the Tudors and the Stewarts, as it would have been so much easier for them to obtain what they wanted by loan, based on the credit of the nation. After the Revolution which placed William III. on the throne, the total national liabilities fell short of one million sterling. But the great wars which that king prosecuted on the Continent, swallowed up more money than could possibly be raised by taxation, and the millions gradually increased in number; the Bank of England having been established primarily to facilitate the raising of them. Even a century later, the total had not assumed serious dimensions, though the annual expenditure it entailed proved a grievous burden on an impoverished country. The war with the American colonies doubled it, and by the time the French Revolution of 1789 began to exercise its disturbing influence, the amount had reached the respectable figure of three hundred millions. That proved a mere bagatelle, however, for in the course of another quarter of a century, during which Great Britain was involved in almost every European complication, it was trebled, and after the battle of Waterloo, had attained to the record sum of nine hundred

millions sterling. Every political economist of that day was scared, and had it not been for the marvellous expansion of industry and commerce that followed, the nation would undoubtedly have become hopelessly bankrupt.

It must not be supposed, however, that the country ever received so much money, as the issue of a large proportion of the last six hundred millions was accompanied by jobbery and corruption of the grossest description. British credit in those days did not permit of loans being obtained on anything like the basis of 3 per cent., and there were thus two alternatives, either to pay a higher rate, or issue stock at the lower one at a heavy discount. Unfortunately the latter was chosen, though that was a blunder, and not an act of dishonesty. Statesmen and economists had no experience of national finance on a large scale, and were infatuated with the idea of redeeming the debt at a low price, entirely overlooking the possibility of market appreciation. It was in the allotment of the loans and the subsequent disbursement of the proceeds that the jobbery arose. No period of our political history has been productive of such scandals, and the votes, first of electors, and then of the members of Parliament elected, had to be purchased by the Government at a heavy price. Three per cents. fluctuated during those years between a little under fifty and a trifle over seventy, averaging about sixty, but much of the new stock was issued to political supporters, at a price enabling them to realise at once a profit varying from 5 to 10 per cent. Needless to say, there was always a scramble for it, and much heartburning and disappointment among those who were left out, or who did not consider they had been rewarded with a sufficient amount. But the evil did not cease even then, for the army and navy contractors, into whose hands much of the money eventually passed, deliberately swindled the Government they were supposed to serve, and accumulated great fortunes with amazing rapidity. It is not too much to say that, for every hundred pounds of stock issued, the country received barely fifty in actual value.

We are confronted then by the disagreeable fact, not only that in redeeming debt we are paying back two sovereigns for every one borrowed, but that we are in reality paying interest at the rate of about $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., instead of the $2\frac{3}{4}$ we so fondly imagine. It is no use crying over spilt milk, and national obligations must be rigidly met. That the work of redemption is costly, every one will admit, but it is an important question whether, under present circumstances, the method of procedure is not unduly extravagant. It is the settled, as well as the commendable policy of both political parties in the State to make an annual reduction in the funded debt, and that is accomplished mainly in two ways. A fixed sum is set aside for its service, considerably in excess of what is necessary for the mere payment of interest, and the surplus is used for the purchase of stock in the open market, which is subsequently cancelled. It is easy to see that this surplus becomes larger each year, as the interest on the cancelled stock ceases and becomes available for

fresh purchases. And in addition to this, we have already seen that any budget surplus is invariably applied in the same manner. But there is another method known as terminable annuities. The holder of consols surrenders them absolutely to the Government, which, instead of paying him the ordinary rate of interest, grants him something like double for a definite and limited number of years, when the payment entirely ceases, and the stock is cancelled. In the early years of the next century, something like fifty millions of debt will disappear in this manner, and the annuities will cease, and provided there is no readjustment in the meantime, a sum equal to the interest on that amount will be annually applied to the purchase of more stock. The process of depletion therefore is going on, and promises to continue at a very rapid rate.

In addition to this funded debt, or consols, there is always a floating one of more or less important dimensions. Budget deficiencies, should they arise, have to be borrowed; sometimes estimates are passed for the expenditure of large sums within a short period, to be provided only by taxation spread over several years, and that money must meanwhile be borrowed. In these and other ways debt is accumulated, which it is not politic to render permanent, and it is raised by means of Treasury Bills, that is, Government promissory-notes, payable in three, six, and never more than twelve months. Whenever any of these mature, therefore, they can always be paid off provided there is sufficient money in the Treasury. Inasmuch as these bills are now being discounted at less than 1 per cent. per annum, there is a strong temptation to keep them in circulation, and pay off instead debt bearing interest at $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent.

At first sight that undoubtedly appears the wiser plan. But however satisfactory it may be from the sentimental point of view of the national credit, to see consols quoted at 106 or 107, it is an eminently unsatisfactory state of affairs for the pockets of the taxpayers; for not only has stock for the sinking fund to be purchased at that figure, but the competition of the Government brokers in the market helps to keep it up. It is bad enough to know that we are cancelling stock issued at fifty or sixty on such terms, but it will be intensely aggravating if, at a future period, perhaps at no very distant one, some grave national emergency arises which will necessitate its reissue, or in other words, that an extraordinary expenditure will be incurred beyond what can be raised by taxation or mere temporary borrowing. Under such conditions the rate of interest ruling would be much higher than it is now, confidence and credit would be disturbed, and the stock so eagerly mopped up at 106, would reappear at a figure much nearer 86. The question arises then whether it is wise policy to go on cancelling the national debt in large amounts at the present price?

That this policy is helping to intensify the evil there can be little doubt. Putting aside any feelings of patriotism, it must be admitted that there are reasons why the debts of other countries should stand quite as high in market value as our own. Nobody supposes that what-

ever may happen, France, Germany, or the United States would ever repudiate their national liabilities. Yet while British 2½ per cents. are at 106½, German threes are a little under 100, French threes a little over that figure, and United States fours at 112. All these funds are the favourite medium for safe investment in their respective countries, and are readily, almost greedily absorbed. In thrift and wealth, the English peasantry is not to be compared with that of France, and the latter is always ready to take up unlimited amounts of *Rente*. In the United States, the bonds may be used by banks as the basis of a note issue, and are eagerly purchased for that purpose. But in England, investment is confined mainly to one or two classes, banks and kindred institutions, whose business requires them to keep a certain amount of easily realisable securities, private trustees, and of course the public trusts, such as savings-banks. Other things being equal, therefore, British consols should not be higher than their foreign competitors. But there is one important difference. The demand is equally great everywhere. France, Germany, and the United States meet it every now and again by the creation of new stock; Great Britain reverses the process, constantly diminishes what is in existence, and by so doing raises the market against herself.

It is not a matter of suspending the sinking fund; that, for the present at any rate, must remain untouched. But there are other ways of applying it which ought to be considered. The Government, for instance, in one of its departments performs the work of a banker, borrowing money, and loaning it out at a somewhat higher rate of interest to local authorities for public purposes. In that way some portion of the fund might be used, but it would almost be preferable to allow it to remain idle for a time, rather than spend it on the costly luxury of consols at 106. That sooner or later they will fall to a more reasonable level is almost certain, and the accumulations might then be used to greater advantage than can be done at present. That many people are benefiting by the present high price is exceedingly doubtful. Those who invested when they were lower do not realise, because they could not use their money to any greater advantage with corresponding safety. They want a steady income without depreciation of capital; their object was not to increase it, and a decline to cost price would be no hardship. On the other hand, it would not be difficult to prove that there is an element of future danger in the situation, if it continues for any length of time, and any considerable aggregate of trust-money comes to be invested at a high level; and it is not only consols that have to be taken into account, but a large mass of other securities which enjoy many of the same privileges, and move in sympathy with them.

In the management of our National Debt, then, there is much more to be taken into account than its mere economical working. We are sometimes told that the debt is a blessing. At best, however, it is a doubtful one; the country would have got on very well without it, and we should soon console ourselves for its loss. In a

larger or smaller amount it will certainly last another century, and it is our duty to make it as little cumbersome as possible to those who follow us. Still it is well at times to recall to mind that posterity has done nothing for us, that it will not be over profuse in its thanks for what we do for it, and that it is quite possible to deal too generously with it. Times are hard and competition is keen, and the National Debt must not be allowed to inflict injustice on the present generation, in order that the next may reap an uncertain advantage.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

By SIR WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER III.—WAPPING.

How does one get to Wapping? It is not, I believe, generally known that there are trains which take the explorer to this secluded hamlet. They are the same trains which go under the Thames Tunnel. That is one way of getting to Wapping. Another, and a much better way, is to walk there from Tower Hill, past St Katherine's Docks, where you may drop a tear over the wanton destruction of what should have been Eastminster, the Cathedral of East London. The traveller presently finds himself in a long riverside street. Tall warehouses and wharves are on the south side; on the north side, offices. North of the offices are the docks. Between the warehouses are stairs. Here are Hermitage stairs, and since there is a Hermitage Street, there was probably at one time or other a hermit established on this spot.

Then go back and resume your walk along the street. It is like the river itself, a busy highway of trade; the tall warehouses were built for trade; the cranes are out on the top-most floor, conducting the trade; men are swinging out heavy bales of goods and lowering them into wagons which will distribute the trade among other hands. The street, indeed, is full of wagons loaded and wagons unloaded; wagons standing under the cranes, wagons going away loaded and coming back empty. You would not believe there were so many wagons in London. Except for the drivers of the wagons and the men in the upper storeys tossing about the bales, there are no people to be seen in the street. Passengers there are none. Nobody walks in Wapping High Street except to and from his warehouse or his wharf. He goes there on business. Of shops there are but two or three, and those not of the best. And this is Wapping. It seems at first to be nothing but a narrow slip between the river and the docks. This is not quite true, however, as we shall presently see.

I entered the cradle of my race, fortunately, by the best way, the Tower Hill way. It seems a cradle to be proud of; all ancient crafts are honourable, but some are more honourable than others; surely boat-building is a very honourable craft. Noah, for instance, was an eminent boat-builder; probably the first example of that work has never been surpassed.

For the first time I found myself in the

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midst of trade, actual, visible, tangible—fragrant even. It was a kind of discovery to me. I walked slowly revolving the thing. Exports and imports one reads about; they are words which to me had then little or no meaning. Here were people actually exporting and importing with tremendous zeal. The street was a hive of industry. Not one face but was full of business; not one but was set, absorbed, serious, observing nothing because it was so full of thought. No one lit cigarettes; no one lounged; no one talked or laughed with his neighbour. All were occupied, all wrapped in thought. All walked with a purpose: no less a purpose, indeed, than the winning of the daily bread, or the creation of a pile on which the children could live in idleness.

Presently I came to the mouth of the London Dock, where a swing bridge crosses the narrow entrance, and is rolled back on hinges to let the ships pass in and out. It was open when I reached the place, and a ship was slowly passing through: a three-masted sailing-ship, of which there are still some left. I watched the beautiful thing with the tall masts and shrouds—man never made anything more beautiful than a sailing-ship. Looking to the left I saw the crowded masts in the dock; looking to the right I saw the ships going down the river, and heard the dulcet note of the Siren.

The ship passed through; the bridge swung round; I passed over it and continued my way. At this point Wapping widens and becomes a right-angled triangle, whose hypotenuse is the river, and whose altitude is the East London Dock. This triangle, with the riverside street, is all that the docks have left of old Wapping village. On this occasion, however, I did not discover the triangle; I walked on, the street continuing with its warehouses and its wharves and its river stairs.

A little beyond the bridge I came to a house which would have arrested my attention by its appearance alone, apart from the name upon its door-plate. For it was a solid red brick, eighteenth-century house. The bricks were of the kind which grow more beautiful with years. The door, with a shell decoration above it, was in the middle, and there was one window on each side of it. In the two storeys above there were three windows in each: the roof was of warm red tiles. There were green shutters to the lower windows: a solid, comfortable old house. It was well kept up: the paint was fresh; the windows were clean; the steps were white; the brass door-plate, which was small, was burnished bright; and on it, in letters half-effaced, I read the name of Burnikel.

'The cradle!' I thought. 'Here was born the ancestral builder of boats. But where is the yard?'

On the other side of the street stood a huge rambling shed—two sheds side by side, built of wood and painted black. Through the wide open door I saw the stout ribs of a half-built barge sticking up in readiness to receive the planking of her sides. And there was the sound of hammers. And to make quite sure, there was painted across the shed in white letters the name 'Burnikel and Burnikel, boat and barge builders.'

I stepped in and looked round. There were one or two unfinished boats beside the big barge: wood was lying about everywhere, stacked on the low rafters of the roof, in heaps, thick wood and thin wood; there were tools and appliances—some I understood, some were new to me. Men were working. At the sight of all this carpentry work my spirits rose. This was the kind of work I loved. A beautiful place, such a place, I thought, as I would like to work in myself. And picturesque, too, with its high roof and its black rafters and its front open to the river, commanding a noble panorama, wider than is afforded by any of the stairs in those narrow lanes.

At that moment the master came out of a little enclosed box in the corner, called 'Office,' which was big enough, at least, for a high desk and some books.

At the outset, in the evening, I had remarked the curious resemblance of my cousin to myself. By daylight the resemblance was not so marked. He was one of those men with whom a simple inch and a half above the six feet in height makes them tower over all other men. He looked tall and broad, and strong above any of his fellows. So looked Saul. He glanced around him quickly as he came out, as if to see that his men were working with zeal and knowledge. Then he stepped across the yard and greeted his visitor gravely.

'I saw you come in,' he said. 'I only half expected you.'

'Well, I did want to see the old place. And I wanted to see you again.'

'Here it is then, and here I am. Not much of a place after all. Just the same: the yard is the same, the beams of the roof are the same, and though the tiles have been removed, the work is the same. If your ancestor was to look in here, he'd see nothing changed but the workmen's clothes. They've left off aprons, and they've left off stockings. That's all.'

'Good! We are thus in the last century.'

'Yes. The river's changed, though. The Port of London was a much finer place formerly, when the ships were ranged in double line all down the Pool, and all the lading was done by barges—Burnikel's barges. Well! Look round you, Sir George. Here is where your great-grandfather worked, and where your great-great-grandfather, and so on, ever so far back. This is where you came from.'

He took his visitor over the little yard, pointing out something of the craft and mystery of boat-building.

'I ought to have boat-building in the blood,' I observed. 'The mystery seems familiar to me. Don't you think that so many generations of boat-building—with this little break of just two lives, one a judge, and one a—nothing—ought to make me take to the trade naturally, as a duck to water?'

Robert Burnikel answered seriously. He was a very serious young man. Besides, light conversation is unknown at Wapping.

'Why not?' he said. 'Natural aptitude must come with generations of work. There is a kind of caste in every trade. I know a line of carpenters, from father to son; and a line of watchmakers; and a line of blacksmiths.'

These men of mine are all the sons of boat-builders; they grew up in the trade. I don't think they could have done anything else so well. As for you—well, your grandfather was a judge.'

'For the first time in my life, I am ashamed to say that he was.'

'Not that you need be ashamed, I suppose, but still he broke the line. All the rest of us have always been boat-builders or sailors.'

'I suppose, now, that you could make a boat yourself with your own hands, from keel to gunwale, from stem to stern?'

'He would be a poor kind of master who couldn't do anything better than his men. I used to work, hammer, and saw, and plane with the men when I was a 'prentice.'

So we talked about boats and boat-building. Then the master builder looked at his watch. 'Four o'clock,' he said. 'Now come over the way. I live in the old house built by the first of them who came here. We can talk for an hour or so before tea. I told them you might be coming to tea.'

'Terrible! Who was 'them'? Fair cousineses? I trembled and followed.

The old house was that of a solid and substantial merchant who understood the arts of comfort. The hall was wainscoted with a dark polished oak relieved by a line of gold along the top and lit by a broad window on the stairs. The staircase was broad and stately: such a staircase as is impossible in a narrow London house. Robert Burnikel opened the door of the room on the left. 'Come in here,' he said, 'till tea is ready. We can talk at our ease in here. This is my own room.' He looked around with some pride, not so much in the old-world beauty of the room, in which any one might have taken pride, as in the things which belonged to, and proclaimed, his own studies. It would be difficult, indeed, to find anywhere a more beautiful room. The walls were of panelled cedar, dark and polished: over the mantel was a mass of carved wood, grapes in bunches, vine-leaves, scrolls, branches, heads of cupids, all apparently thrown together upon the wall, but there was method in the mass; the fruit and the leaves formed a frame round a shield on which was blazoned—in proper heraldic colours, or and gules and azure—a coat of arms.

'Why,' I cried, 'those are my arms! I thought they were granted to the judge as the first "armiger" of the family. He had them already, then. This is very curious. We were a family of gentlefolk.'

'The first Burnikel, you see, of whom we know anything builds this fine house, lines it with cedar and rosewood, and oak wainscoting; adorns it with wood-carving'—

'That overmantel work might belong to a later time,' I interrupted.

'And had a coat of arms. He was a gentleman, I suppose. If you care about that fact, I don't.'

'Yes, I do care about that fact. Gentility is a real thing, whatever you may think. I am very glad indeed to recover this long-lost ancestor.'

One side of the room, however, was com-

pletely spoiled as regards the original intention of him who clothed it with cedar, by the introduction of a bookcase covering the whole wall and fitted with books. There was a central table littered with papers, and a smaller table with a row of books. And there were only two chairs, both of them wooden chairs with arms—the student's chair. The books, one might observe, had the external appearance of having been read and well used; the bindings being cracked or creased and somehow robbed of their pristine shininess. I looked at them. Heavens! What a serious library of solid reading! Herbert Spencer, Mill, Hallam, Freeman, Stubbs, Hamilton, Spinoza, Pagshot, Seeley, Lecky, and a crowd of others for history; Darwin, Huxley, Tyndall, Wallace, and more for science; rows of books on the institutions of the country and on the questions of the day.

'These are my books,' Robert pointed to them with undisguised pride. 'I don't believe there's a better collection this side of the Tower. I collected them all myself. And what's more, I've read them, every one, and I know them all.'

'I suppose,' I ventured, 'that you are not married?'

'No, I am not. No, sir. Marriage holds a man down just where it finds him. If I were married I should be wheeling the perambulator, saving money for the children, running for the doctor. No. I shall marry some day—when I have succeeded. Not before.'

'Then you have a mother or a sister living with you?'

'No. Father died five years ago, and there were left my mother with myself, two brothers and a sister. The business isn't good enough for more than one. So my two brothers went off to Tasmania, and they've started a yard of their own. My mother went out to see them, and I think she'll stay. You see mother is a determined kind of a woman; she'd always been master here, father being an easy kind of man, and she wanted to go on being master. Now, there can't be two masters in this house. So, when she understood that, she concluded to go. My sister Kate went with her. Kate wanted to be master too. So it's just as well for family peace and quietness that they did go away. I'm all for peace, and always shall be, but I mean to be master in my own house.'

The speech revealed things volcanic; the son of the mother, the mother of the son, the sister of the brother, the brother of the sister: all masterful, and all striving for the mastery. And the son getting the best of it. So he made a solitude and he called it peace.

'And you are left all alone in this great house?'

'No. Some cousins of mine—not your cousins—mother's cousins, keep the house for me. They are a retired skipper and his daughter. The daughter does the housekeeping. She is also my secretary, and keeps the accounts of the place over the way. Can't follow an argument, of course. No woman can.' This is to have lived all your life at Wapping. 'You'll see her presently. I've told her, by the way, if that matters—only I want you to understand how I stand, and what sort of a man I am

—that I shall marry her one of these days, when I have got on. Not before. Of course,' he snorted, 'she doesn't expect any fondling and kissing and foolishness.'

'Poor girl!' I did not say this. I only murmured, 'Yes, I see, of course,' in the usual way when one is surprised and a coherent reply is difficult.

Here was a gallant lover for you! Here was an ardent lover! Here, in the language of the last century, were flames and darts and pains and madness of love! He was going to wait for ten or twelve or forty years, until he had achieved the object of his ambition: and there was to be no fondling, and the future wife was to be reduced to proper order!

'And now,' said the man of ambition, abruptly, 'about that information that you promised to get for me. That's what we came here to talk about, not coats of arms and girls. Have you got it?'

'I have been to see a man whom I know. He is a politician; he lives in politics; he thinks about nothing else. And I spent this morning with him discussing your case—much as you told me last night. I can only tell you—I felt a little embarrassed, for obvious reasons—what he told me.'

'Go on. What did he say? That a boat-builder from Wapping mustn't dare to think of the House?'

'Not at all. They don't mind much what a man is by calling. What I understood last night is this. You wish to go into the House and to make your way upwards by your own abilities, alone. You will force the House to recognise you.'

'Yes. My model is John Bright. I've got his speeches and I know his history.'

'But John Bright became in the long-run a Party man.'

'John Bright was a power in the country as an independent member long before he went into the Cabinet. I want to be a power in the country.'

Then I told him all I had learned; the first steps and so forth; and this and that. He listened patiently: when I told him what other men did, he nodded his head; when I warned him, he shook his head; when I finished, he sprang to his feet impatiently.

'No more warning, thank you. I shall succeed. You do not understand yet, Sir George, that you have to do with a very able man indeed.'

This kind of talk may be arrogant and offensive. But Robert Burnikel was neither. He made an arrogant assertion with a calmness which was modesty. He advanced it as one who states a scientific fact. Belief in himself was a part of the man's nature. More than this, as you will see, he succeeded in convincing those who heard him.

'Now for my fitness,' he went on. 'Listen to this. First of all, there's nobody like me in the House at all. I am a master craftsman. I make what I sell. I am not a shopkeeper. I make. There are working-men in the House: shopkeepers, manufacturers, lawyers, country gentlemen, but the master craftsman the House hasn't got. And it wants him badly.'

'Well?'

'That is not all. This place, so secluded and cut off by the docks and its river, is a little world in itself. You can study everything in Wapping. I know the working of the whole system—parish—vestry—county council—school board—everything. I know all about the church, the parish, the school, the workhouse, the parish rates. That's practical knowledge. But that is not enough. One must understand principles. All institutions are based on principles. So I have read Herbert Spencer and Mill, and all the books that treat of practical things and what they mean.'

'Go on.' I grew more and more interested in this man—this strong man.

'Well, I read the debates every day. Nothing interests me in the paper so much as the debates. Day after day I say to myself when I read the rubbish that is talked there, "This is wrong. This is ignorant. This is foolish. This is mischievous." And I know what I should have said.'

'Well. But you are as yet untried in oratory and in debate.'

'Not at all. I went into the Blackwall Parliament at sixteen; at twenty I led the House. I can speak. I have studied the art of oratory. I have read all I could find on the subject. I tell you that I am an eloquent man. I know that the House doesn't want claptrap; I spoke at Poplar last winter, and I made 'em laugh and made 'em cry just as I chose, and because I wanted to try what I could do with them. That was only claptrap. I can speak better than that. And as for my voice, listen—Do, Re, Mi.'—He ran up and down the scales not only with correctness and ease, but with a flexible, rich, and musical baritone.—'That's good enough for anything, isn't it? Why, as soon as I found I had a voice I rejoiced. I went into the church choir in order to learn the use of it. I didn't want to sing in the choir; it wastes good time, but there is the practice. Nothing like singing for keeping the voice flexible.'

'Very good. Very good indeed.'

'Well, I have told you everything. What do you think about my fitness to go into the House to-morrow, and to rise in it?'

The question was meek. The manner was aggressive. It said plainly, 'Deny, if you dare, my fitness.'

MEMORIALS AND RELICS OF SIR WALTER SCOTT.

EDWARD FITZGERALD, who had been refreshing his memory with *The Fortunes of Nigel* in 1881, could not help remarking to his correspondent, Fanny Kemble: 'Oh, Sir Walter is not done for yet by Austens and Eliots. If one of his merits were not his *clear daylight*, one thinks, there ought to be societies to keep his lamp trimmed as well as Mr Browning.' Well, there is a Scott Club to keep his lamp trimmed, if that were needed, which dines and has excursions, indulges in speeches and the collection of relics and preservation of letters, in order to keep his memory green. The publishers have done their

part in producing varied and abundant editions of his novels, and we have now at least a dozen to choose from. Such a pothos is being made at this tag-end of the nineteenth century over many minor writers, that, with limited time and endurance, there seems a risk that Scott may not receive his due from the average reader. Ruskin has said that he could find no words full enough to tell what good Scott had in him to do his readers. The recent issue of his *Journal* and an instalment of *Private Letters* only confirms the good impression made by the ten volumes of *Lockhart's Life*. For, as Mr Quiller-Couch observes on this point, 'you may explore here and explore there, and still you find pure gold: for the man was gold right through.' The genial sunshine which Washington Irving felt warming every 'creeping thing' around him into 'heart and confidence' still breathes in the literature which flowed from his pen.

One of the first attempts at a popular biography of Scott was that issued about a week after his death in connection with *Chamber's Journal*. It was announced that this life of Sir Walter Scott was given in connection with the *Journal* 'at a mere trifle, as a still stronger earnest than any hitherto held out, of the desire of the publishers to reduce general literature to the level of the whole community.' It was claimed that there was as much matter given there for three-halfpence as in many a half-guinea work. Also that for about ten years the editors (William and Robert Chambers, who were amongst the ten or twelve persons who left Edinburgh to attend Scott's funeral) had been collecting materials for this brief biography.* A very interesting budget of original anecdotes was also contributed to *Chamber's Journal* by Mrs John Ballantyne. Many waifs and strays of anecdotes and dribbles of information have since floated from time to time into print, as it were from the four winds of heaven, and of some of these we may avail ourselves here. Scott lived a robust, full, and busy life, and left his impress in many unsuspected nooks and corners. And the time seems ripe for a fresh gleaming, which can only serve to heighten the impression of his greatness, and simplicity, and robust healthfulness. The late Mr Dykes Campbell had in view some supplementary work to Lockhart, which he, of all men, would have done with patience and intelligence. Robert Chambers, James Hogg, R. H. Hutton, C. D. Yonge, George Gillillan, and others, have issued monographs on Scott. Mr Andrew Lang is busy with a revised edition of *Lockhart's Life of Scott*, as well as a *Life of the biographer*. In the way of review articles there is nothing better, despite its watered praise, than Carlyle's essay. Scott's great-granddaughter has described the antiquarian relics of Abbotsford, and Andrew Lang has here and there unearthed some fresh information for his edition of the novels.

One might begin by asking, where is the monument to Scott in Westminster Abbey? Thereby hangs a tale. All the world has admired the result of the labours of that self-taught genius, G. M. Kemp, which graces

Princes Street in Edinburgh—as Professor Masson has remarked, the finest monument yet erected to a man of genius anywhere. A few enthusiastic Scotsmen subscribed in one night funds sufficient for a copy of it for New York Central Park. Native Scotsmen were none so enthusiastic over the home monument, for in February 1844 it had come to a standstill for lack of funds, £3000 being required to carry it to the desired height. Nor is it quite completed yet! Sir Thomas Dick Lauder asked the aid of Charles Mackay through the *Morning Chronicle*. A London committee was formed, but the subscription list only reached £269. A Waverley Ball had the patronage of the Queen and Prince Albert, and yielded £1100. These sums were utilised on the main design, and not on statuettes or accessories, as was done with the sum of £600 raised by the London Waverley Ball of 1871. This first London committee got a good deal of wholesome advice in prosecuting their labours. Lockhart looked coldly on the design chosen, and would have preferred a sitting statue at the south end of Castle Street. Lord Lytton thought that the 'money spent on the living might have saved the struggle and prolonged the days of Scott.' What was then being done was but a mockery of the dead. His works were his best monument. If the Scotch wished for such a monument, then it was right they should pay for it, for 'the moment the Scotch suffered Sir Walter Scott to leave Abbotsford unpaid, they lost the only opportunity of rendering practical homage to the man who had brought gold into their country through a thousand channels.' Charles Dickens rather concurred in this opinion. Croker would not subscribe again, because he believed he would never see the monument, although somebody wickedly offered to pay his fare to Edinburgh if he would only do so. In spite of all this criticism, the monument was so far completed at a cost of £15,000, and opened in 1846.

As regards a memorial to Scott in Westminster Abbey, the matter, it appears, stands thus. A committee collected subscriptions to the amount of £171, and Sir John Steell was entrusted with the execution of a medallion, which he completed in 1887. Although the subscribers admired and approved the completed design, Mr J. L. Pearson, R.A., the Abbey architect, pronounced it 'out of scale, and that it would be undesirable to put it in the Abbey.' Dean Bradley coincided in this view, so the medallion has lain in charge of the clerk of works, Westminster, ever since. We are glad to hear, however, that the matter, thanks to a strong memorial, is likely to be satisfactorily arranged.

It is well known that after Scott's failure in 1825, a committee of legal gentlemen stepped in and prevented the disposal of the Abbotsford collection of books and antiquarian curiosities. These are vested in trustees, the Dean and Council of the Faculty of Advocates, Edinburgh. The Scott Museum in Abbotsford occupies five out of the forty rooms there, and the revenue derived from entrance fees is over £400 a year. The house, with grounds and shootings, when let to a tenant, brings £200 a year. Thither to this 'romance in stone and lime' come the feet of pilgrims from the ends of the earth.

* Now published in a revised edition, with Autobiography, in Chambers's series of popular biographies.

A writing-desk on which Scott wrote most of his novels was given to his amanuensis, William Laidlaw; on the death of his daughter Katherine, last year, it passed, along with a collection of letters, to her nephew, Mr W. L. Carruthers, Inverness. The gold snuff-box presented by Scott to Sir Adam Fergusson is now in possession of Mr C. E. S. Chambers, the editor of this *Journal*. In 1892 Mary Gray Garden, a daughter of the Ettrick Shepherd, possessed a small gold brooch, set with pearls, and containing a lock of Sir Walter's hair, perfectly white, cut off after death, and given by one of the family to her father. His pony-phæton was possessed by Mr W. Macfie of Clermiston, Midlothian; the sofa and fire-grate from his study in Castle Street, by Rev. Donald Masson, Edinburgh. To the Advocates' Library, which already possessed a novel of Scott's in manuscript, the Marquis of Huntly has handed over forty-seven instruments of credit, drafts, and promissory-notes (1819-1825), the latter showing sums amounting to £30,000. The gold watch which Scott presented to Dr Clarkson of Melrose, his medical adviser, after Lady Scott's death, is still worn by a descendant. A ring, bearing the inscription, 'From Jedediah Cleisbotham to his friend Bailie Nicol Jarvie,' along with a scarf pin, are possessed by a son of Mr Mackay, who acted this character in *Rob Roy*. The picture by Sir David Wilkie, 'The Abbotsford Family,' representing the Scott family in lowland Scots peasant costume, was added in 1895 to the Scottish National Gallery, at a cost of eight hundred guineas.

A find of one hundred and three letters written by Scott to Mr George Craig, agent of the Leith Bank, Galashiels, was announced in 1894, but, as may be supposed, these relate chiefly to transactions in money matters with Constable, Coutts, and the Ballantynes. One letter written after his failure, January 28, 1826, proceeds thus: 'The most unexpected failure of Messrs Constable & Co. has thrown my affairs into such irremediable perplexity, that, with the perfect confidence of doing justice to every human being, I have been compelled to ask time to do so. . . . I have the pleasure to think that no other person is likely to be a loser but myself, if this mode (a private trust) should be generally adopted and that in my own life, if God grant me life and health.' The grand gatherings at Abbotsford were over; the furniture of his Edinburgh house was sold, and he sat down bravely at fifty-five to redeem a debt of over £100,000. By his unparalleled labours, and the judicious farming of his copyrights by his new publisher, Robert Cadell, this was accomplished soon after his death. Cadell was said to have bought most of Scott's copyrights for £8400, though more than three times that amount was paid ere they were all secured. Just before Cadell's death in 1849, these were valued at £60,000; while he was said to have made £100,000 in business, chiefly as Scott's publisher. These copyrights were sold by Messrs Hodgson at the London Coffee-house in March 26, 1851, and purchased by Messrs A. & C. Black for £27,000. 'Time and I against any two, no man in the end shall lose one penny by me,' Scott remarked after his failure. While

this was so, it is impossible to estimate what the commercial value of the Waverley novels has been to Edinburgh and Scotland generally; and particularly to paper-makers, printers, bookbinders, publishers, and booksellers.

Most of the printable material connected with Scott, which has been discovered, has been readily given to the public, with the exception of two novels which he began in the decadence of his powers at Naples, the one entitled *The Siege of Malta*, the other *Bizarre*. Lockhart gives the foundation for the last story in the *Life*. A series of imaginary Private Letters of the Reign of James I. has been printed in one of the magazines with Mrs Maxwell-Scott's consent. These were the letters which Scott had penned in 1821, when warned by his friends that he was throwing away good material for an historical romance. He took their advice, went no further, and wrote a novel instead, *The Fortunes of Nigel*.

The coursing meets at Abbotsford seem to have been much enjoyed. 'Losh, woman,' said a farmer to his wife, 'what a day we've had! I wish I could sleep till this time next year. The hunt is the only thing that's worth living for.' Maida, described as one of the finest dogs of its kind ever seen in this country, the noblest and most celebrated of all his dogs, is believed to have shortened its life by excessive fatigue in keeping up with the greyhounds at these coursing meetings. This favourite animal was a present from Colonel Ronaldson Macdonell of Glengarry. He was a cross between the Pyrenean wolf-dog and the deer-hound.

An Edinburgh High Street missionary frequently related an incident of his Selkirk boyhood. He had witnessed the death of a companion who had gone up to pat a horse in a harvest-field, which had kicked him so severely in the head that he died. It was the duty of Scott (then sheriff) to inquire into the cause of death. He sat down in a chair beside a little table, took the boy on his knee, looked down in a kind and encouraging way in the boy's face, and clapping him on the head, said, 'Now, Johnnie, what did the horse dae to the little laddie?' His kindly manner won the boy's confidence, and he told his story in boyish language, and at the close, Scott said, 'There's a sixpence to you, Johnnie, for telling me yer story sae weel.' It is related that he seldom passed boys on the road without speaking, or taking notice of them in some way. Miss Skene has related a pretty anecdote also of her childhood, when Scott discovered she was reading the *Abbot*. 'Well, my little lady, what have you got there? I suppose it is the *Arabian Nights*.' The little girl raised her head soberly, and fixed her eyes on his kind face, and replied: 'No; it is a book called the *Abbot*.' The great man showed his displeasure so plainly, and at the same time hid the enormity of her guilt from her father, who was present, that the book was instantly put away.

When the eldest son of Mr Maxwell-Scott of Abbotsford was born, the Queen is reported to have telegraphed her congratulations: 'He shall be knighted "Sir Walter" when he is 21.' When his mother was presented at court by her aunt, the Duchess of Buccleuch, the Queen kissed her on both cheeks before the court.

saying, 'This is all we have left of Sir Walter.' As Princess Victoria she saw Sir Walter Scott in her ninth year, when he dined with the Duchess of Kent at Kensington.

The world, and Scotland particularly, has never been so enthusiastic about Scott as about Burns; but Scott's creed in life and literature had the democratic touch of a big heart, with the pride of a Scottish laird and gentleman. Once when writing to Miss Edgeworth, he reproved her for attaching too much importance to literature and literary people. 'Let me tell you,' he wrote, 'that I have had the privilege of knowing some of the most celebrated men and women of my time, and that I have derived more satisfaction and comfort from the conversation and example of the poor, unlettered, hard-working people, than from all the wisdom of the learned folks. I have heard finer sentiments and seen finer lives among the poor people than I have ever seen or heard of anywhere outside the pages of the Bible. Believe me, my dear, all human learning is mere moonshine compared with the culture of the heart.' And this goes well with his death-bed advice to his son-in-law, Lockhart: 'My dear, be a good man—be virtuous—be religious—be a good man. Nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here.'

THE SEA QUEEN.

BY JAMES WORKMAN.

I.

THE following telegram, addressed to Richard Carson, arrived one afternoon in July, at an isolated post-office on the coast of Skye: '*Sea Queen off Holyhead. All well.*' Maggie Mackenzie, the telegraph clerk, was alone when she received it. Her cheeks flushed and her eyes sparkled as she copied it out.

'That's brave news!' she exclaimed. 'Mr Blake will be a proud man to-day. My certes, he wouldn't be long at the fishing if he knew what was waiting for him here. I should like fine to see his face when he reads it—and I will, too, for I'll hand him the telegram myself the minute he comes in.'

But the light went out of her eyes and she looked puzzled and distressed when she realised that the telegram was addressed to Carson and not to Blake. Carson was not the owner of the *Sea Queen*. Why should the telegram be addressed to him? The men were old acquaintances, and were both stopping at the inn to which the post-office was attached; but it never even occurred to Maggie that Carson might have instructed an agent to forward the telegram in order that he might be the first to communicate the glad tidings to Blake. His most casual acquaintance would have smiled at the bare idea of such a thing. Maggie had, moreover, very good reasons for believing that he detested Blake, and would not scruple to injure him if the opportunity presented itself. He suspected—as he had bluntly informed her—that Alf Blake was responsible for what he considered her incomprehensible refusal to be-

come his wife; and if he could hit on a scheme, however unscrupulous, of crushing his rival, he was not the man to hesitate.

Still it seemed impossible that the innocent-looking telegram before her could be used as a weapon against Alf, and with a smile at her fanciful suspicions Maggie picked up an envelope in which to enclose it. At the same moment the fragments of a conversation which she had overheard the previous night flashed across her mind, and seemed at once to supply a motive for Carson's conduct. She had gathered from the disjointed sentences which reached her that Carson—a professional speculator—had offered Alf a merely nominal price for the *Sea Queen*, and that Alf, despairing of her safe arrival, had almost consented to accept it. If Carson had agreed to increase his offer by a hundred or two, the bargain would have been completed on the spot. Now that Carson was sure of the *Sea Queen's* safety, she had no doubt that he would keep the telegram in his pocket, increase his offer, and induce Alf to part with the vessel for a fraction of its real value.

If he did so, the rosy dreams of fame and success that had come to Alf with the *Sea Queen*—an unexpected legacy from a wealthy relative—would melt into thin air. He was an impecunious journalist with literary aspirations, and he had intended to sell the vessel, invest the proceeds, give up reporting, devote himself entirely to literature, and so realise the most cherished ambition of his life. His name was already known as a writer of short stories and descriptive articles, and with a permanent private income to fall back upon, he had no fear of the future. But unfortunately the *Sea Queen* was not insured, and after leaving Cape Coast Castle at the advertised date, was already two or three weeks overdue; and Alf, who had been waiting in an agony of suspense to hear news of the missing vessel, was beginning to abandon all hope of her arrival. Maggie was sure from his tone and manner on the previous night that Carson would find no difficulty in carrying out his infamous scheme.

Though it was clearly her duty to deliver the telegram at once, she still stood gazing at it with an air of painful indecision. Alf was fishing in the lochs among the hills, miles away across the wet moors. Even if she had been free to leave the post-office, how could she be sure of finding him, or at least of doing so without Carson, who was sitting in the porch staring moodily at the driving mist, discovering what she had done.

Discovery would mean ruin. It was illegal to keep back the telegram or to disclose its contents. She had taken the usual oath. She had solemnly and sincerely declared that she would not wittingly or willingly open or delay or cause to be opened or delayed anything that came into her hands or custody by reason of her employment relating to the post-office, except by the consent of the person or persons to whom the same should be directed. If she were found guilty of violating her oath, she would be instantly dismissed. She believed Carson to be absolutely unscrupulous. If he discovered that she had spoiled his plans by disclosing the contents of the telegram, she did

not believe he would spare her. Even if he did so for the time being, she would ever afterwards be at his mercy. She remembered with a shudder the expression of his eyes, the hard set lines of his face, when he told her that sooner or later he would force her to marry him. What might the fear of exposure compel her to do? If she had already found it difficult to struggle against his strong will and dogged pertinacity, how would she be able to resist him when her whole future, her honour, her livelihood depended upon his silence?

She loved Alf. She realised that clearly enough now; but she did not believe that, except in the way of friendship, he cared for her. If he loved her, if she were certain of it, the sacrifice would be so much easier. But would the consciousness of having thrown away all that makes life worth living, merely to prevent an act of injustice, comfort her amid the reproaches, the contempt, and pity of her friends and relatives? To violate her oath, to face humiliation and disgrace, and then to be abandoned to a lonely, loveless, miserable life, seemed a burden too heavy to be borne. If she were dismissed— Her face suddenly flushed crimson and then turned white. Would dismissal be her only punishment? It flashed upon her that it might prove the lightest part of the penalty she would have to bear. With trembling fingers she searched a drawer in which she remembered a copy of the Act relating to such matters had been placed. She found it, and this is what she read:

'Any person having official duties connected with the Post-office, or acting on behalf of the Postmaster-general, who shall, contrary to his duty, disclose or in any way make known or intercept the contents of a telegraphic message, or any telegram entrusted to the Postmaster-general for the purpose of transmission, shall in England and Ireland be guilty of a misdemeanour, and in Scotland of a crime and offence, and shall upon conviction be subject to imprisonment for a term not exceeding twelve calendar months.'

As she read it she was seized with a panic. She could no longer debate the matter in cold blood. Her brain whirled round. She could not think. She could only act, and her action was naturally the result of her sudden terror. She slipped the telegram into an envelope, and almost ran out of the office.

'Hamish!' she called breathlessly. 'Hamish!'

A little bare-legged Highland boy came pattering along the passage.

'Away with this to Mr Carson. He's in the porch. Away with you this minute.'

He darted away with the telegram in his hand, and then she realised what she had done.

'Hamish!' she cried feebly. But the boy had disappeared.

She turned back into the office, faint and dizzy, and leaning on the desk, buried her face in her hands.

'Oh, what'll I do, what will I do?' she moaned. 'I've spoiled his life—I've ruined him.'

From an official and legal point of view, she had done her duty, and yet she was sick at heart with shame and self-loathing. It seemed to her at that moment that she had purchased

her own safety weakly and selfishly at the expense of the man she loved.

Hamish scurried past the window and in at the door.

'D'ye see that?' he cried breathlessly, opening his little brown fist, and revealing a shilling. 'Mr Carson gied it me. I'm thinking it will be good news he was gettin', for he smiled and looked awfu' pleased, and patted me on the back and gied me the shillin'.'

Now that Maggie had taken the irrevocable step, she would have given worlds to retrace it. She seized a form and mechanically wrote out a copy of the telegram; but a moment after threw it impatiently aside. Alf was miles away among the moors, and it was running too great a risk to entrust it to a messenger. If she did so, questions were sure to be asked, and the truth would come out sooner or later. She could not leave the post-office herself. Macdonald, the postmaster and proprietor of the inn, was the only other person who could attend to the telegraph, and he had driven to Broadford, and the time of his return was uncertain. In the meantime, Carson might grow impatient, and instead of waiting for Alf to turn up, might tramp across the hills to meet him. Peering cautiously out of the window, she waited with beating heart to see what he would do. He came out of the porch, scowled at the rain and driving mist, and went back. He reappeared again and again, and every time she expected him to take the road across the hills; but after throwing a black look round and muttering angrily to himself, he invariably retreated into the porch.

Maggie had learned to hate the long monotonous days when the rain dripped ceaselessly from sunrise to nightfall, the mainland disappeared in mist, and the dismal gray sea moaned drearily among the rocks. But now the least pause in the steady downpour, the faintest lightening of the sky, made her heart flutter with fear, and she prayed that the rain might not stop, and that Alf might stay among the moors until she had time to think, to decide upon some course of action. She longed for a few hours' even a few minutes' delay. Some way of escape might present itself. Macdonald might arrive and leave her free to act as she thought best. Some friend or agent of Alf's in Liverpool might telegraph the news of the *Sea Queen's* arrival, and then all would be plain-sailing.

She heard the sound of wheels. Was that Macdonald? She darted to the window. It was only a party of guests from the Castle driving merrily through the rain. The sound of steps took the blood from her face. Could it be Alf? It proved to be a drenched fisherman trudging past with a string of salmon, bream, and whiting. The electric bell rang, and she leapt to her feet. It might be a message from Alf's agent. It was only a telegram to one of the guests at the Castle. The suspense became unbearable. She could not sit still. She moved restlessly about the room, trying vainly to determine what she ought to do, listening and watching for Carson, for Macdonald, for Alf, and utterly incapable of deciding on any definite course of action. When

the time came for decision, she did not hesitate a moment. She acted half mechanically, moved—as it seemed—by some power outside herself.

Several hours passed before Macdonald arrived. She thrust the copy of the telegram into her pocket and was half-way to the door, when she stopped abruptly. Carson had turned out again, and was talking to Macdonald.

'Wet day, Macdonald,' he remarked briskly.

'Ay, it's a coarse day,' replied Macdonald drily; 'but it's a grand day for the fishing. Mr Blake'll be away to the loch, I'm thinking.'

Carson was no favourite with the innkeeper. His want of enthusiasm about fishing, and his fear of getting wet, had lowered him immensely in Macdonald's esteem.

'Oh yes,' rejoined Carson. 'He went off soon after breakfast. Wanted to drag me with him, but I wasn't such a fool. Don't see the force of tramping over wet moors, and standing up to my waist in water all day, for the sake of catching half-a-dozen beastly little fish.'

'Ah, well,' said Macdonald coldly, 'it takes all sorts of men to make a world, and I've met many a bigger fool than Mr Blake.'

'Have you any idea which way he'll come back?' asked Carson, ignoring Macdonald's somewhat aggressive tone. 'I thought I might stroll up the hill a bit and meet him.'

'I can't tell you that,' answered Macdonald. 'There's half-a-dozen ways he might come home, and if you'll take my advice, you'll just bide where you are. If you go up the hill, you'll be getting your feet wet, and then who knows what may happen to you.'

Macdonald came in grinning through the passage on which the door of the office opened, and Maggie intercepted him. She told him she wanted to go out, and begged him to attend to any telegrams that might arrive. The grin disappeared, and he looked a trifle crusty.

'My word, lassie, you're no blate,' said he. 'I'm just wet to the skin, and wanting my dinner. Can't you wait a while?'

But Macdonald, like most of those who came in contact with Maggie, could refuse her nothing. One glance at her piteous face, pale and quivering with agitation, disarmed him.

'Hoots, lassie,' he exclaimed; 'I'll manage fine. Away with you.'

She caught a Tam-o'-Shanter from behind the door, slipped it over her curly dark hair, and darted out into the rain. She whisked round to the back of the inn, and ran up the hill. She wished in the first place to escape from Carson's keen eyes, though even yet she hardly knew whether she would warn Alf or not. The path twisted up the side of the hill, and she was soon out of sight of the inn. Then she walked more slowly. The rain was still falling steadily. The heather was like a sponge, the narrow path a series of runlets and pools, the ground soft mire, in which at times she sank ankle deep. The hills before her, the sea behind her, were shrouded in mist. She toiled higher and higher; the rain still falling, the mist thickening. Her Tam-o'-Shanter was drenched through, and her clothes hung on her like lead. Though she had even yet no clear notion of what she would say or do if she met him, she was tortured by the fear

of missing Alf. If he had gone astray in the mist, or come by another path, she might be unable to see him alone before he met Carson. Goaded by the thought, she hurried on, mounting one slope after another until she reached a point from which she could overlook a long stretch of moor. Alf was in sight. She instantly darted behind the jutting corner of a wood, shrinking with terror from the decision she could no longer postpone.

II.

In the meantime, Alf was walking across the moor slowly and wearily, with bent head and dragging feet, a forlorn, drenched, miserable-looking object. He was in a mood of black depression. He believed that the cup he had just raised to his lips had been dashed aside. He saw nothing before him but a dreary, hopeless struggle amid uncongenial surroundings. It would have been easier to bear had a brighter prospect never tantalised him. He had been haunted all day by a conviction, which no argument he evolved could shake, that the *Sea Queen* was at the bottom of the Atlantic. He was so sure of it that he fully expected to find a telegram announcing the fact waiting for him at the inn. He began to regret that he had not accepted Carson's offer. Even that would have been infinitely better than nothing. As it was, he would have to go back to his dreary work amid lecture-halls, concert-rooms, and police-courts. He seemed to hear the monotonous throbbing of the machinery, to get a whiff of the indescribable smell of a newspaper-office, and his soul turned sick within him. He was physically exhausted, hungry and wet and weary, and, moreover, he had gone away without any matches, and had been unable to soothe himself with a pipe.

He looked so pathetically wretched that Maggie, peering at him through the leaves, felt a sudden pang of pity and stepped promptly forward to meet him. He glanced up, and was instantly transformed. His cheeks flushed and his eyes danced with pleasure.

'Well, Mr Blake, have you had a good catch?' asked Maggie, with a desperate effort to preserve her usual indifferent manner.

'First-rate,' rejoined Alf, swinging his creel round and lifting the lid. It was full to the brim of fine trout.

'You've done real well,' said Maggie. 'There are some grand fish there. But, dear me, you must be wet to the skin.'

'Yes, I'm pretty wet,' he rejoined, with a glance at his dripping clothes. 'But I think there's not much to choose between us. You're nearly as wet as I am, and you've no mackintosh. We must hurry back.'

'Oh, Skye rain hurts nobody,' answered Maggie. 'I just came out for a walk, and I'm not going back yet awhile.'

Alf's face fell.

'You're not coming back yet?' he repeated dolefully.

'No,' she answered petulantly, 'I'm going farther up the hill.'

'Oh,' said Alf disconsolately, 'I thought—I thought—'

Maggie laughed strangely.

'You thought I'd come to meet you? I wonder what could put that into your head, Mr Blake. But you'd better be moving, or you'll catch your death of cold.'

Alf turned pale and looked away. Then he glanced at her with a pleasant smile.

'Well, I hope you'll enjoy your walk,' he said. 'I do feel rather tired, and so I'll take your advice.'

He plodded drearily on, and she watched him with a curious mingling of pity and irritation. In another moment she was at his side.

'As you're so ready to take advice,' she said, almost rudely, 'I'll give you another piece of it. If any one's for buying the *Sea Queen* from you, you'll tell him you're not such a—such a gowk as you look.'

Alf stared at her in bewilderment.

'What do you mean?' he asked. She thrust the copy of the telegram into his hand.

'That means fortune for you,' said she; 'but it means shame for me. I've no more right to show it to you than I have to pick your pocket, but I couldn't—I couldn't bear—oh, away with you to the inn, and get your clothes dried. I'm for the hill.'

One glance at the telegram was enough. With two strides Alf was up to her and caught her by the hands.

'Maggie,' he exclaimed, and his dripping face shone with delight, 'you did this for me?'

'Ay,' she said, turning aside to hide her swimming eyes and twitching lips. 'And what'll become of me when it all comes out, I daren't think.'

He kept tight hold of her hands, and peered into her face.

'Oh Maggie,' said he; 'Oh Maggie, my dear, do you love me?'

'Love you indeed!' she exclaimed, struggling to free her hands. 'What havers! Away with you to the inn.'

'Not I,' retorted Alf, 'not I. You've got to listen to me, Miss Maggie Mackenzie. I've caught you at last, and every word I've long wanted to say to you, you shall hear before we part. Maggie, my dear, I've loved you since the first minute I saw your bonny face; but till you put that telegram into my hand I was a poor man, and God helping me, I swore I'd never ask you to share the dreary life I've led till now. Besides, I thought—I thought—I was beginning to think that you liked Carson better than me. Now I shall have enough to keep us both; and if you'll be my own dear wife, Maggie, I'll be true and kind to you all the days of my life, and one word from you will make me at this moment the happiest man in all the world. What do you say, Maggie?'

Maggie said nothing, but the light in her eyes made words superfluous. The rain still came washing down, and I suppose two more thoroughly soaked lovers never kissed each other since the days of the Flood.

'Well,' said Maggie mischievously, 'I don't know whether you're the happiest man in all the world, but I'm thinking you're surely the wettest. Down the hill you go this minute, sir, and change your clothes, or'—

She stopped abruptly. There stood Carson, watching them with a look that struck the

smile from their faces. Alf had dropped the telegram when he darted after Maggie, and Carson had picked it up and read it. He had realised the situation at a glance. The fingers that held the telegram quivered, and his face was livid with passion.

'Do you quite understand what this means?' said he, ignoring Alf and addressing Maggie. 'Do you know what is the penalty for disclosing the contents of a telegram? In the eyes of the law you are as much a criminal as if you had stolen my watch or forged my signature. You shall pay for this—do you hear me? You shall pay dearly for this. I will teach you to cross my path and spoil my plans.'

Maggie clung to Alf in a sudden paroxysm of terror, overcome by the sickening sensation of weakness which she had always experienced when her will was opposed to Carson's. Even Alf's presence failed to reassure her. He had always seemed too sensitive and diffident to be anything like a match for a prompt, unscrupulous, imperious man of affairs like Carson.

'What do you mean?' asked Alf quietly.

'What do I mean, curse you!' exclaimed Carson savagely. 'I mean that this girl has rendered herself liable to twelve months' imprisonment for disclosing the contents of a telegram addressed to me.'

'And do you suppose,' continued Alf, speaking more slowly and in a lower tone than usual—'do you for one moment imagine that any judge or jury possessed of the most elementary sense of justice would condemn her for exposing one of the dirtiest and most contemptible frauds that even such a man as you ever perpetrated?'

'Take care!' shouted Carson. 'Mind what you're about!'

'I assure you,' rejoined Alf, 'that I am selecting my expressions with the nicest care. You certainly are precisely the most despicable person I ever met, and I have not the smallest particle of doubt that my opinion of you will be shared by every man and woman in the kingdom, if you are ever imprudent enough to make these proceedings public.'

'Then listen to me,' exclaimed Carson. 'I care not one brass farthing what you or any other fool may think of me, and I swear that I will spare no time or trouble or money to have that girl punished as she deserves, unless'—

He paused.

'Unless?' asked Alf.

'Unless you leave Skye by the *Claymore* to-night, and take a solemn oath that you will never see or speak to her again.'

'There is just one little difficulty in the way,' remarked Alf; 'but I am afraid, I am really afraid, Carson, that it will prevent my adopting your no doubt well-meant suggestion. Maggie has just promised to marry me.'

'She shall not marry you,' cried Carson. 'I tell you she shall not marry you. Now, look here, Blake, you don't understand me. You don't know what I'm capable of. If you drive me past a certain point, I'll stick at nothing—do you hear me?—I'll stick at nothing. You'd better get out of my way before it's too late.'

'To use your own elegant expression,' replied Alf, 'I don't care a brass farthing what you're

capable of; and I understand you perfectly. On the other hand, I am inclined to think that you don't understand me. You seem to be labouring under the delusion that because I decline to soil my hands with your dirty methods of money-making, that I am your mental inferior; and that because I have some consideration for the feelings of others, I must, in the nature of things, be a coward. You are simply a stupid, selfish, coarse-fibred bully; and I assure you I care no more for your bluster than I care for the whistling of the wind in the trees. I will give you a sufficient proof of the value I attach to your threats.—Give me your hand, Maggie.'

Trembling with agitation, Maggie slipped her hand into Alf's, and they walked down the hill, Carson, after a moment's hesitation, following close behind. Maggie little guessed what was in Alf's mind when, still clasping her hand, he marched straight into the kitchen, where Macdonald, two or three fishermen, and the schoolmaster were sitting by the fire, and Mrs Macdonald was baking scones. They looked up in astonishment. Carson stood in the doorway. Alf and Maggie made a curious couple—a pale, slim, pretty girl in a Tam-o'-Shanter, and a dilapidated-looking object in a sou'-wester and an oilskin coat, with a creel at his back and a rod in his hand.

'Mr and Mrs Macdonald, and you two gentlemen,' said Alf coolly, 'I wish you all to take notice that I hereby solemnly declare in your presence, as witnesses, that Margaret Mackenzie is my lawful wedded wife.—Is that true, Maggie? Are you my wife?'

Maggie stared at him with white face and wide startled eyes, too frightened and bewildered to clearly understand what he meant. Then suddenly the truth flashed upon her, a rosy blush coloured her pale cheeks, and with a timid cry she buried her face in her hands.

'Come,' said Alf, 'you must speak, Maggie, and speak out so that every one can hear you. Are you my wife?'

And Maggie, quivering with excitement, cried, 'Yes,' and hid her blushing face behind the grimy old oilskin.

'My conscience!' exclaimed Macdonald.

'Well, that beats everything,' said the schoolmaster.

'They're clean daft,' cried Mrs Macdonald, wiping her hands on her apron, and glowing with delight.

'What's the meaning of this senseless mummery?' exclaimed Carson. 'Do you suppose that a ceremony like that will hold good?'

'Here in Scotland it does!' chuckled Alf. 'Maggie's my lawful wedded wife as certainly as if we'd been married by the Archbishop of Canterbury.'

'It's an infernal lie,' shouted Carson. 'I don't believe it.'

'You may believe it or not,' said Mrs Macdonald wrathfully, 'and it matters not the bone of a herring whether you do or you don't. They're man and wife; that's just the simple truth of it.'

'It's true, Carson,' said Alf. 'You're beaten, my man, and you may as well give in; and you may understand, once for all, that you

may do or say just precisely what you please. Neither I nor my wife care the weight of a straw for your threats.'

Then Carson threw up the sponge. 'Bring me my bill,' he exclaimed savagely. 'I'll not stay another hour in this Heaven-forsaken hole. Bring me my bill, I tell you.'

'I'll do that, Mr Carson,' rejoined Mrs Macdonald, in high displeasure, 'I'll do that gladly; and you'll be a contented man if you're as pleased to go as I am to see the last of you.'

So the bill was made out, and was perhaps none the smaller for Carson's injudicious insolence; and he stalked off to the landing-place, and waited for six hours in the rain for the *Claymore*, which had been detained at Portree, and sailed for Glasgow, breathing threatenings and slaughter, but came to his senses before he reached the Clyde, and ever afterwards kept his mouth discreetly closed.

And Alf raised the pretty blushing face, still hidden against the dingy wet oilskin, and kissed it boldly in the presence of the witnesses.

'I can do that now, Mrs Macdonald, can't I?' said he. 'She's my wife now—isn't she?'

'She is that, sir; but it's not every one that understands the peculiarities of the Scotch marriage laws, and if you'll take my way of it, she'll just be Miss Maggie Mackenzie until you're made man and wife by the minister. Besides, a lassie has just one chance of making a stir in the world, and that's on the day she's married; and Maggie must have her comings and goings o' courtin', and her bridesmaids and her cake, and her bit presents, as well as the best of them.'

'I'll take your advice, Mrs Macdonald,' exclaimed Alf, 'and some of your excellent scones at the same time, and anything else you have handy, for I'm just on the very brink of starvation.'

'The first thing you'll do,' said Maggie, as one having authority, 'is to go and change your clothes, for you're just for all the world like a sponge, and you're fairly standing in a pool of water.'

And Alf showed that he realised the consequences of his new position by meekly obeying.

EVENING.

Beyond the summit of the far-off hill,

The golden sun has sunk into the west;
No wind disturbs the air of evening still,

The weary world is peaceful and at rest;

One crimson cloud hangs in the upper air,

Like some fair ship, that in a quiet bay

Lies anchored, waiting for the breeze to bear

Her swiftly to strange countries far away.

A bird or two, that have not fall'n asleep,

Still twitter drowsily from bush or tree;

The shadows gradually onward creep,

And darkness, like the dim eternity,

Which men know not, yet dread, envelops all,

Folding the flower-clad earth within her pall.

A. H. MURRAY.

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server, and no one can read his compendious researches or speculations in various directions of natural history and sport in Bute—to name one of many—without a feeling of admiration and will result from time to time in the filling in of details of more or less value.



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truth or it.

'It's true, Carson,' said Alf. 'You're beaten, my man, and you may as well give in; and you may understand, once for all, that you

A. H. MURRAY.

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No. 632.—VOL. XIII. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

BIRDS FROM MOIDART.

By J. E. HARTING.

FIVE and twenty years ago, comparatively little was known of the avifauna of Scotland. The labours of Macgillivray and of Sir William Jardine, so fully recognised at the present day in works still popular, though so long ago published, were not confined to Scottish territory, but had reference to a more general investigation of British zoology in which their observations on Scottish birds formed merely a part. It is much to be regretted that neither of these distinguished naturalists lived to prepare a general work on the birds of Scotland, a work which would have been as welcome as it would certainly have been reliable.

Charles St John, gifted with equal power of observation, though with less scientific attainment, has probably done more than any other writer of a past generation to unveil the natural beauties of the Scottish Highlands, and make us acquainted with the haunts and habits of Scottish game and wildfowl, with which he himself was so thoroughly familiar as a sportsman and a naturalist. His *Wild Sports and Natural History of the Highlands*, his *Tour in Sutherland*, and his *Natural History and Sport in Moray*, are books that live in the memory of all who have perused them; faithful records of accurate observations, delighting as much by the information which they convey, as by the charming and unaffected style in which they are written.

Nor should the name of John Colquhoun, as a writer on Scottish field-sports, be forgotten amongst those who have helped to make us better acquainted with all the wild denizens of 'Moor and Loch.' Though claiming no rank as a scientific ornithologist, he was, like Christopher North 'in his aviary,' and 'in his sporting jacket,' a keen sportsman and shrewd observer, and no one can read his chapter on natural history and sport in Bute—to name one of many—without a feeling of admiration and

indebtedness. To Robert Gray, however, we are beholden for the first published attempt at a general work on Scottish ornithology. In 1871 appeared his *Birds of the West of Scotland*, for which he had paved the way in 1869 with a smaller book on the *Birds of Ayrshire and Wigtownshire*. The larger work at once attracted favourable attention, and it was not long before it became 'out of print and scarce.' Although ostensibly dealing only with the west of Scotland, with which Robert Gray was most familiar, it has, in fact, a much wider scope, owing to the observations which are made throughout the volume on the status of various species in the west as compared with their position in the east. In fact, had the author lived, a companion volume dealing fully with the avifauna of the east of Scotland would in all probability have seen the light.

It has been reserved for Mr Harvie Brown, in collaboration with Mr T. E. Buckley, to plan, prepare, and in a great measure to carry out a comprehensive work in sections dealing with the vertebrate fauna of the whole of Scotland and the Isles, and to judge by what has appeared to the present time, nothing could be more satisfactory. The volumes already issued are (1) *A Vertebrate Fauna of Sutherland, Caithness, and West Cromarty* (1887); (2) *The Outer Hebrides* (1888); (3) *The Birds of Iona and Mull* (1890); (4) *The Orkney Islands* (1891); and (5) *The Fauna of Argyll and the Inner Hebrides* (1892); while the sixth and seventh volumes, dealing with the *Fauna of the Moray Basin*, are announced as nearly ready for publication. This admirable series of volumes, which must have cost its authors an infinity of trouble and years of patient observation and collection of records, will contain, when complete, all that is known (or likely to be known for some time to come) of the vertebrate fauna of Scotland and the Isles, although naturally the researches of specialists in various directions will result from time to time in the filling in of details of more or less value.

We have been led to take up the last published volume of this series, which relates to Argyllshire, in consequence of the recent appearance of Mrs Blackburn's sketches of birds made chiefly in that county.* Dwelling at Rosliven on that promontory which juts into the Sound of Arisaig between Loch Allort and Loch Moidart, Mrs Blackburn is favourably situated for observing the wildfowl and sea-fowl, which at different seasons frequent the salt and brackish waters by which she is surrounded, and of which there is a pleasing variety. Ducks, divers, and grebes come into the lochs; guillemots and razorbills may be seen fishing in the sound; gulls and terns follow the coast-line, along which the dainty ring-dotterel, with sandpipers of various sorts, are always gleaning the harvest of the sea. Farther out the gannets soar and plunge upon the passing fish, of which toll is sometimes taken by the rarer osprey. Concerning the last-named bird Mrs Blackburn tells us that its mode of carrying a captured fish is noteworthy. Instead of grasping it, as generally represented, across the back with the feet held parallel and close together, it takes it fore and aft as a man would hold a spear, and carries it head foremost so as to present the smallest surface of resistance to the opposing wind.

The alleged fondness of the tawny owl for fish is confirmed by the partiality which was evinced by some birds of this species which Mrs Blackburn had at liberty in her garden. When first imported there, they were not old enough to shift for themselves, and so had their food provided for them daily. They were very fond of fish; a share of what was caught was put out for them every evening, and was always devoured before morning.

Amongst other fish-eating birds studied in their natural haunts is the heron, of which a picturesque group of eighteen was sketched one fine summer morning while resting on the shore of Loch Eil, below Ben Nevis. A half-starved bird of this species, captured during a hard frost, was brought home and turned into a garret. It would take herrings out of a bath, and then stand on one leg on a chair for an hour or more, quite still, in a favourable position for being drawn. When the thaw came, it was restored to liberty at the spot where it was found.

Mrs Blackburn has lived long enough in Moidart to have noted some curious changes in bird-life in that district. In 1856 there were no starlings there. They began to come only a few years ago, resting temporarily on the islands. Now a good many stay all the year round, and live in the dovecot among the pigeons. Some try to build in the chimneys of the house, if the rooms are empty and fireless, filling them up yards deep with sticks which are very difficult to get out. One has to light an occasional fire to drive them away with the smoke, and prevent their repeating the offence, which they are only too ready to do.

Thrushes, also, are much more numerous now at Rosliven than they used to be, probably owing to the increase of cultivation, and enlargement of garden ground. They stay all the winter unless the frost be unusually severe. There were no common sparrows to be seen when the author first knew the district, nor for many years afterwards. Since they came, the yellow hammer is said to have decreased in numbers.

A curious departure from the normal mode of nesting has been observed in the jackdaw and the wood-pigeon. Mrs Blackburn has seen nests of the former bird on the island of Inch Murrin in Loch Lomond among the roots of old oak trees, some of them quite low down in the ground, others above, with great quantities of sticks both above and below. She has heard a tradition to the effect that the wood-pigeons in old times used to build their nests on the ground, but their young having been so often destroyed by passing cattle, they took to nesting on trees. It is curious that the same thing has been reported of the pigeon-like *Didunculus*, or little dodo, in the island of Samoa, in its attempts to escape from the pigs of the settlers which sought for and devoured the young birds. Nightjars Mrs Blackburn has seen 'in the gloaming, running about on their short legs on the gravel near the house, catching white ghost moths near the grass.' The observation 'running about' is new to us. On the wing, or perched upon a tree, this bird is familiar enough, but very few persons are sharp enough to detect it on the ground before it has taken flight, since the soft brown and gray shades of colour in the plumage harmonise so wonderfully with the natural surroundings as almost to defy detection of the bird until on the wing.

Perhaps the most interesting of all Mrs Blackburn's sketches is that which she gives of the young cuckoo ejecting from the nest the young of the meadow pipit, its foster parent. The story is not new, for she published it many years ago, and it gained her some notoriety in the ornithological world, since it confirmed the earlier statements of Jenner, which had been doubted, and even rejected as incredible, by some who ought to have known better. Her observations on the subject have been accepted and quoted by Gould in his *Handbook to the Birds of Great Britain*, and by the present writer in his *Summer Migrants*, and have since been fully confirmed by the late John Hancock from his own observations in the garden of his friend Hewitson at Oatlands (*Zoologist*, 1886, p. 208), a fact which Mrs Blackburn might well have noted in her new volume.

Her drawing of the young cuckoo as well as of the adult bird are amongst the most successful in the book; but there are many others of almost equal merit. The spotted flycatcher feeding its fledgling, the young ring ouzel from the hills of Moidart, the stonechat and whinchat on the farns, the blue tit on the larch, the young hoodie crow which had fallen out of its nest in an old aspen-tree on an island in Loch Allort, the swimming guillemot with half-closed wings on the point of

* *Birds from Moidart and Elsewhere, drawn from Nature*, by Mrs Hugh Blackburn, sm. 4to, 102 pp. Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1885.

diving—all these are faithful transcripts of nature which do credit to the artist.

The letterpress which accompanies each plate is in many cases too brief. It might well have been longer; for a lady who can observe birds to draw them as Mrs Blackburn can, must have much more to tell concerning them.

It is well for those whose lines are cast in such pleasant places as the author of these charming sketches from the north. While from her sea-girt home she can gaze over moor and loch, we in the far-off city must be content to look wistfully towards the misty mountain top which towers above the far Loch Eil, and thank her for the pleasant peep she has given us of bird-life in Argyllshire.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

CHAPTER IV.—‘TEA IS READY.’

THERE was no time for any reply, because just then the door was opened and a girl's head appeared. ‘Tea is ready,’ she said, and disappeared.

Tea was served in the room on the other side of the hall. Like the study, this room was a lovely old room also, completely wainscoted with cedar. There were the same carvings over the mantel, fruit, flowers, grapes, leaves, and branches, and the shield with the family coat of arms. The room was, however, lighter than the study, partly because it contained in each of the upper panels family portraits, and on the panels below oil-paintings representing the river as seen from the boat-yard, with its ships, barges, hoys, lighters, boats, and all the life and motion and business of the river in the last century. So little regard for art was there in the family that no one knew who had painted these panels. Yet it was no mean hand which had designed and executed them. Many indications pointed to the daily occupancy of the room by the household. In the window, for instance, stood a small table, with a work-basket placed there out of the way; there was a sideboard of the Second George of mahogany, black with age; it was one of the kind consisting of two square towers, each with a locked door and two compartments within, and a broad flat connecting piece with a drawer. In the middle portion stood a noble old punch-bowl, surrounded by glasses—lovely old glasses—the convivial rummer, the useful tumbler, the tall champagne glass, the old-fashioned little port glass, the tiny liqueur glass—a beautiful assortment such as a mere modern cannot understand. On one side of the towers stood a glass filled with spring flowers, and on the other, as if belonging to the masculine sort, a case for spirits. On the panels above the pictures was a row of china plates—they had stood there for a hundred years, only taken down from time to time to be dusted. On the other side of the room, opposite to the door, was a cottage piano, open, with music piled on the top. In one corner, near the fireplace, was a

little stack of churchwarden pipes, and in the other corner was a door, half open, which revealed a surprising cupboard. The eighteenth-century housewife demanded so many store-rooms, for all her jams, jellies, pickles, wines, cordials, and strong waters; so many still-rooms, linen-rooms, and pantries for the immense collections which her family wanted for the successful conduct of a household, that it became necessary to have a cupboard in the parlour, or general living-room, as well. This cupboard belonged to the Burnikels of the last century; but its use was continued by the present occupants. Here were kept the cups and saucers, old and new; here was the plate-basket containing the forks and spoons in daily use—silver, not plated, and thin with age; here were certain books which once formed the family library—they were chiefly of the religious kind; here were tea-caddy, coffee-caddy, and sugar-basin; here were the decanters which belonged to the Sunday dinner; here were household account-books; here was the corkscrew; here were mysterious phials; here were kept the marking-ink, the writing-ink, the pens and paper; here was the current pot of jam; here were the lemons; here, in short, the thousand and one things likely to be wanted every day by the household. For this room was the family keeping or living-room; it was not the dining-room, or the breakfast-room; it was the parlour; Robert's room had been the best parlour until he changed it into the study.

One did not take in all these details at once; but I had abundant opportunities, afterwards, of noting everything. Meantime, what I observed first of all was that ‘tea’ meant sitting down to a white cloth, spread with a magnificent display of good things. I remembered my cousin's ominous words, ‘I told them that you might come in to tea;’ ‘they’ had provided this square meal in hospitality for me.

The girl who sat behind the tea-tray, ready to serve, was doubtless the housekeeper, accountant, secretary, clerk, whom my cousin was some day about to marry. A slight, delicate-looking girl she appeared to be; and she seemed shy, her head drooping. Beside her stood, supported by a stick, an elderly man.

‘This is Captain Dering,’ said my cousin, introducing his friend, ‘and this is Isabel Dering.’

The girl bowed stiffly. The captain extended a friendly hand.

‘Glad to make your acquaintance, sir,’ he said heartily. ‘There was a time when I made new friends every voyage, but three times are over. The sight of a stranger at Wapping is a rare event, I assure you.’

‘Especially,’ I said, ‘a stranger who comes in search of a long-lost cousin.’

The face and dress and general appearance of this old gentleman indicated his profession. It was nautical.

‘My rough old figure-head,’ face and dress and general appearance all cried aloud together, ‘tells you that I have been a sailor. My clear honest eyes tell you that I am a

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sailor. My red and weather-beaten cheek; my blue cloth; the shape of my jacket—all proclaim that I am a sailor—and proud of it, sir, proud of it.'

Then Robert Burnikel, to my confusion, because I thought the custom (over a cup of tea) long exploded, pronounced a grace. It was an old family grace dating from the time when all respectable families of the middle class were extremely religious, and the Church of England was evangelical, and when ladies conversed and wrote letters to each other almost entirely on the condition of their souls. Quite a long collect, this grace was. Yet the utterance was as purely formal as that of grace in a college hall, or grace in a workhouse, which is the most formal thing I know. Robert pronounced that grace mechanically.

This form of prayer concluded, we all sat down. A tremendous tea was on the table: ham in slices, boiled eggs, potted tongue, prawns, bread and butter, cakes of many kinds, including plum cake, seed cake, Madeira cake, tea cake (which is a buttered or bilious variety), short cake, biscuits, jam, marmalade, and honey. A hospitable tea. A square tea, in fact. A tea, like Robert Burnikel himself, at once serious and earnest and heavy.

As a rule, I repeat, I take nothing with my afternoon tea. But one must not be churlish. My cousin glanced at me before the prayer, as if to say, 'You shall see for yourself how Wapping can do it.' And I was expected to do justice to all these good things provided for my honour. Why, if this splendid spread was out on the table every day, the captain's clear eye would become yellow and the master would find it no longer possible to follow out an argument, for the black spots, lines, and circles which would be bobbing about between his nose and the printed page. It must have been an exceptional spread. No one could live through a month of such teas. I avoided the ham and escaped the eggs, and declined the shrimps. But I went in for the cake, and on the whole acquitted myself, I believe, creditably. The captain and the giver of the feast, on their parts, ploughed their way resolutely through the whole array of dishes.

When the first pangs were appeased the captain spoke.

'Sir George Burnikel,' he said with solemnity, 'I commanded the *Maid of Athens* which ran between Calicut and Ceylon for many years. As the captain of that noble vessel I've taken passengers aboard of the highest rank—the very highest—not to speak of coffee planters. Not that their rank made them better sailors. I acknowledge so much. But it made me a respecter of the British aristocracy, Sir George Burnikel, of which you are a worthy member. Robert here is all for pulling down. Why? I ask you, humbly, Sir George—why?' Robert grunted.

'Why, I ask? When you break up an old ship, she's gone. Let her be. Let her go on till she's wrecked or cast away. No, sir, when you've carried noblemen upon the Indian ocean, and found out that they are exactly like other people—must be stroked the right way—want the most comfortable berths—drink

the same grog, and talk the same language—then you get to respect the aristocracy. Because you see, with their chances, they might have been so very different. And then you ask, why pull down? Why sweep away?' He addressed the question to Robert, who only grunted. It was obviously an old subject of dispute.

Then the captain turned to the table again and proceeded to work through the festive spread in silence. The lagging of conversation enabled me to look about and observe. To observe in a strange house is to make discoveries. First, I regarded the girl at the tea-tray. She was rather pretty, I thought: too pale, as if she took too little exercise or worked too hard, or was underfed; she had curiously soft and limpid eyes—of the kind which seem to hold within them unknown depths of something—wisdom, perhaps; love, perhaps; prophecy, perhaps—according to the lover's interpretation. Her features were regular but not of classical outline: her cheek looked soft as velvet; her lips were mobile. But she was too grave; she looked sad even. I remembered what my cousin said, 'No fondling and nonsense.' At twenty-four one has not a large experience, but I certainly could not help thinking that she was a girl designed and intended by nature to live upon love, and the fondlings and caresses and outward signs of love, which her fiancé thought so ridiculous. To have none! To wait for ten, twelve, fifteen years, and to lack that consolation and comfort! Poor child! Poor Isabel!

And then I made another discovery. The girl was afraid of her cousin—the master—the man who would not permit his own mother to entertain any illusions about the mastery. She was afraid of her own lover! Wonderful! She watched him anxiously; she anticipated his wants in silence; he received her attentions without acknowledgment. Why was she afraid of him? Did he scold and abuse his secretary?

My host, I perceived, conducted his eating with the resolution and the rapidity that becomes habitual when one sits down to eat and not to talk. As I learned afterwards, there was little conversation at the table in this house because the master was always full of his own thoughts and despised the common topics of the day and the season. Perceiving, when he had himself finished a very substantial stop-gap between dinner and supper, that his guest had also ceased taking in provisions, he rose abruptly, pushing back his chair and his plate. One may remark this thing done daily in the cottage and in the village. It is an action which seems to belong to a level lower than that of a master boat-builder: one might have expected more attention to style: but, as I learned afterwards, in a house where one man rules absolute, like Nero of Rome, and nobody dares to expostulate, some deterioration of manners is apt to creep in.

'Now,' he said, 'if you won't take any more tea cake? a few shrimps? an egg? No? Then we'll go and have another talk.—Isabel, you needn't come in.'

The captain took no notice of our departure.

I bowed to the girl, who looked a little surprised at this act of courtesy and rather stiffly inclined her head.

Outside the door Robert Burnikel stopped. 'Up-stairs,' he said, 'I think there is something to interest you. Come along.' On the second floor he threw open the door of a room. 'This,' he said, 'is called the spare room. But I never remember that it was occupied. We could do without it, I suppose; and we never had any visitors to stay the night. So you see, it is only half-furnished.' The room contained a wooden bed with mattresses, but no feather-bed, or spring-bed, or curtains—only the frame; there were three or four odd chairs standing about, and there was a great sailor's chest. 'This,' he explained, 'is the bed of old John Burnikel, the man who had the bag of diamonds.'

'Oh! It is a pity we haven't got the bag as well, isn't it? Did your great-grandfather buy the bed?'

'I suspect there was no buying. He was on the spot and he took it—bed and sea-chest and all. I suppose he thought that perhaps in spite of their failures to find it, the bag might be somewhere about the bed.'

'And he searched, of course.'

'I believe this bed must have been taken to pieces a hundred times. My brother and I once took it to pieces and tapped every piece all over with a hammer to see if it was hollow. Look! Here is the secret cupboard in which people used to hide their things.' It was at the head of the bed. He pressed a certain spot in the woodwork and a door flew open, disclosing a small recess. 'Everybody knew the secret, but everybody pretended not to know. Of course, when the old man was gone, the first thing they did was to look into this secret cupboard. But there was nothing in it. Then they turned the house inside out. Then they quarrelled and fought. Then they dissolved partnership.'

'And then,' I added, 'they accused each other, for three generations after, of stealing that bag. It's a wonderful family story. Let me try.'

I put in my hand and felt round the little cupboard. There was nothing.

'And this,' my cousin went on, 'is the old man's sea-chest. That, too, was brought here at the same time as the bed. The two things, except for a table and a chair, and a frying-pan, were all the furniture the old man possessed. It's a most marvellous thing to think of. What became of that bag? A hundred times and more that old bed has been pulled to pieces, and that old chest has been turned out to see if there was any hiding-place still undiscovered.'

A large, iron-bound sea-chest. I threw open the lid. It seemed to contain a queer lot of useless rubbish.

'The sight of this box,' said Robert, 'makes one believe that there really must have been a bag of diamonds after all.'

'Of course there was. The only thing is—what became of it? Nobody knew anything about it. Nobody was in the house from the time that the old man was taken ill until his

nephew came; no outsider stole that bag. What became of it, then? Of course, it is no good asking now. Still it is mysterious.'

'Yes. And about ninety years ago the two cousins were standing over the dead man's bed, just as we are doing now. I feel as if it was yesterday. Don't accuse me of stealing the thing, or there will be another fight.'

Robert smiled grimly. Were there to be another fight he was perfectly assured about the event. A very superior young man in every direction. I noted the smile and understood it. But it was all part of this very singular and masterful personality to which I was thus singularly introduced.

By this time I was fully impressed with the fact that I had to deal with a very remarkable, resolute, and ambitious young man, who cared about nothing in the world but his own advancement; strong and able, masterful, self-confident even to the very rare degree of communicating his secret ambitions. Most men, again, limit their ambitions by the circumstances and the conditions of their lives: they do not look much beyond. The ambition of the average working-man is to get continuous work, sometimes to become a master; the ambition of the average young shopkeeper is to extend his business; the young solicitor hopes for a steady practice; the young author hopes for acceptance by the editor, only acceptance, only a chance; he has no thought at first of great, world-wide success; his ambition increases as he gets on. In Robert's case the ambition was from the outset full-grown. 'I will go into the House,' he said, being only a boat-builder with a small yard and a moderate business; 'and I will become a Cabinet Minister.' Such ambition was immense, presumptuous, audacious, considering his position. And yet, considering the man, apart from his position, I recognised almost from the outset that it was not ridiculous.

THE TINTOMETER.

ALTHOUGH much might be written about the origin of colour and its beauty and significance in the general scheme of the universe, our principal object in this article is to describe an instrument for the measurement of colour, known as the 'Tintometer.' For scientific purposes colour is measured by means of the spectroscope. The light emitted from a coloured body is split up by prisms, and the spectrum is compared with the solar spectrum and mapped out on a scale. This procedure is all very well for scientific work pure and simple, but the time, accuracy, and instruments required for carrying it out render such a method impracticable for industrial purposes. The analyst has his own methods of comparing and recording colours, but most of the processes require a scientific man to use them. What is needed is an instrument that shall be simple in construction, easily understood, and capable of being worked by any one not versed in scientific methods. In such a delicate matter

as colour, accuracy and reliability are all-important, so that the instrument must possess these qualities in addition. The problem of inventing such a desideratum was taken up by Mr J. W. Lovibond of Salisbury about twenty years ago as a scientific hobby. To engage in research both wealth and leisure are required, and, fortunately, Mr Lovibond as a rich brewer had both. He got together a staff of workers, and hammered away industriously for several years to find the solution of the problem.

The result of their labours is the Tintometer. In its present form a simpler instrument could hardly be imagined, or one more easy to use. It consists of an oblong box, divided by a longitudinal partition into two parallel-sided tubes. The eye, in looking through the middle eye-piece, takes no account of the partition, and sees both tubes at once. Two other eye-pieces are cut in the end of the instrument, so that it can be used either as a binocular or a monocular. At the bottom of one tube is placed the substance to be examined, whilst in the slots of the other tube standard coloured glasses are inserted until the colour of the substance is matched exactly. A coloured solution, such as a dye, is placed in a gauged cell; a solid, such as flour, is compressed into a shallow wooden cell; and a fabric is stretched on a flat piece of wood. Nearly every substance requires some special means of compensating for its texture, so that both sides of the instrument shall appear the same to the eye. Suppose, for instance, that we wish to examine a sample of crystallised sugar. The sugar is compressed into the wooden cell and placed at the bottom of one tube, whilst a similar cell, filled with colourless broken glass of the same degree of fineness as the sample, is placed at the bottom of the other tube. The standard coloured glasses, of which we shall have more to say directly, are then inserted and changed about until an exact match between the two sides of the instrument is obtained. Where flour is to be examined, it is moistened with water and compressed into the cell in a similar way to the sugar; but, instead of broken glass on the other side of the instrument, a cell filled with precipitated sulphate of lime is used to balance the texture of the flour. In the case of a pigment, the colour, mixed with a definite quantity of water, is pasted on white paper, and a piece of the same paper is placed on the other side. Where a dyed fabric is being examined, a white slip of the same material is placed at the bottom of the second tube. A coloured solution, such as a dye, presents the simplest case of all. A definite thickness of the dye is run into the gauged cell; and the light from a sheet of opal glass is reflected through it, the second tube being illuminated by the same reflector.

Although the tintometer itself is so obviously simple, the difficulties encountered in working out this method of colour measurement were considerable. The great trouble has been with the standard coloured glasses, which constitute the important feature of the instrument. They are narrow slips of tinted glass, resembling in shape the slides used for microscopic work, and are arranged in three graduated series of dominant colours—red, yellow, and blue. The

differences between two consecutive glasses in the lighter shades are much smaller than in the darker ones, the increase of tint in each case being just perceptible to the normal eye. As the glasses are standards, destined to last as long as possible, every endeavour has been made to secure their permanency in addition to their purity of colour. The red tint is imparted to the glass by oxide of gold, the yellow by silver, and the blue by cobalt. Recent researches of Captain Abney and others have elucidated the fact that any colour can be imitated by a mixture of two other colours with a certain proportion of black or white, that is, neutral gray. This gray is produced by a mixture of the three dominant colours of the tintometer in equal proportions. If we take any denomination in the standards and mix the three, we shall always produce neutral gray, and this is an infallible test of their accuracy. By the discovery of the relation of the three dominant colours to neutral gray, one of the great difficulties in using the tintometer was overcome. Until comparatively recently it was found impossible to register the constituents of a colour that was brighter than the tintometer standards. When it was found that the difference between dull red and bright crimson was merely due to the absence or presence of white light mixed with the red, the difficulty was at an end. By using neutral gray to diminish the brightness of the colour, it can be brought within the range of the standard glasses and recorded. The tintometer standards are not arbitrary, but are compared in the first instance with certain chemical solutions of known strength, so that if the whole of the standards were destroyed to-morrow there would be no difficulty in replacing them.

The value of the tintometer in the arts generally can hardly be overestimated. The reason why it has been so little known until recently is that the inventor regarded the subject largely as a hobby, and took no steps commercially to create a sale for the instrument. Mr Lovibond, however, drew the attention of scientific men to the results of his work by various papers, read before the Society of Chemical Industry; and several chemists, including the writer, used the tintometer more than ten years ago. Nevertheless, the knowledge of its usefulness was confined to a very limited circle, and it is only quite recently that manufacturers are realising its importance.

The applications of the tintometer are much wider than would appear at first sight. Not only do they include such industries as dyeing, colour-printing, and photography, but extend to such heterogeneous crafts as tanning and the steel industries. In many trades its value depends upon the fact that the colour of a substance is to a large extent an index to its purity, quality, and place of origin. To protect their corn trade, the Russian Government only allow the export of flour that comes up to a certain standard of excellence, and the quality is now determined by means of the tintometer. The values of the whole of the mineral oils imported into the United Kingdom are standardised by the instrument. In brewing, it is adopted by several large firms, and there is

hardly any important industry in which it would not be of service. Of course, colours can be added to many sophisticated products so as to deceive the naked eye, but it is not easy to adjust the fraud with sufficient accuracy to deceive the tintometer standards.

One important feature of the tintometer is the permanency of its records. It will be as easy to reproduce a recorded colour in twenty years' time as it is to-day. All that we shall have to do will be to replace the glasses in the slots of the instrument—so much red, plus yellow plus blue, and to manipulate our printing-ink or pigment or dye, or whatever it may be, until it matches them. For this reason the instrument can be used with great advantage to record fugitive colours. In entomological work, for example, it is nearly impossible to preserve the colours of many insects after death. Works of art that are fading could have a permanent record made of them, so that they could be restored at any time to their pristine condition. We may remark in this connection that makers of artists' colours and printing-inks are finding the tintometer of much service.

Amongst other things, many valuable facts on the nature of colour-blindness have been added to our knowledge by Mr Lovibond's researches. Of three hundred and twenty-four observations made on nine persons of Mr Lovibond's staff, none of whom were colour-blind in the ordinary acceptance of the term, one hundred and thirty decided that the neutral gray of the tintometer standard was neutral gray; ninety-one detected a tinge of yellow, eighty a trace of blue, and twenty-three a tinge of red. It might be interesting here to speak of the relations of the colours among themselves, and of the difference between coloured light and the colour of a pigment. Red light is called the complementary to bluish-green, because a mixture of red and green light produces absolute darkness. Similarly, orange is complementary to sky-blue, yellow to violet-blue, greenish-yellow to violet, and green to pink. There is a popular idea that a mixture of blue and yellow light produces green, when, as a matter of fact, it results in total darkness. A mixture of blue and yellow pigments does produce green, because the blue pigment contains a certain proportion of green, and so does the yellow; when they are mixed, the blue and yellow extinguish one another, leaving only the green. In the tintometer standards, the red contains violet and orange; the yellow, green and orange; and the blue, violet and green. To the eye, however, the glasses appear to be simply red, yellow, and blue. If they are combined, the red and yellow transmit only orange, the blue and yellow only green, and the blue and red only violet. One interesting point that came out during the observations was, that women are much more sensitive to colour than men, their perceptions of small differences of tint being more delicate. Most people have different perceptions of colours in the two eyes, and have a greater power of perceiving some colour, being correspondingly blind to others. The only absolutely non-colour-blind person whom Mr Lovibond has met is a woman. He

attributes the greater sensitiveness of women to colour partly to an innate faculty, and partly to education. The superiority of woman in this respect is interesting, as recent researches by French savants have proved that, as regards the sense of smell, women are much less sensitive than men. For educational purposes, and for testing colour-blindness, a special set of the standard glasses have been placed in an ingenious screen, to be used without the tintometer. For teaching children, and for testing the colour-vision of seamen, railway engineers, and others, the arrangement should prove very useful.

For scientific work the tintometer is being used considerably. It is installed at St Thomas' Hospital, where it is employed to determine the changes in the blood of the patients, and for other pathological purposes. At the Liverpool waterworks, and at the Massachusetts Board of Health, the instrument is used to record the colour and turbidity of potable waters. For scientific investigation, indeed, the employment of the tintometer is extending rapidly, and much work may be done with it that is as beautiful as it is interesting.

THE GIRDLETON GALLERY MYSTERY.

CHAPTER II.

THE lighting arrangements in the poorer streets of Lambeth, as in other humble districts of London, leave much to be desired; hence, although Eltham had taken the precaution of ascertaining the situation of Horn Lane on the directory map before setting out on his quest, he wandered about the maze of unsavoury streets for a full hour before he succeeded in finding the place he wanted. He had decided to approach Welks, the Sunday watchman first, because his dwelling appeared to be the most accessible. 'But if Jackson's place is harder to find than this,' he thought, as he turned into the forbidding gloom of Horn Lane, 'it will take me a week to find it.'

It was a dingy street running down to the river whereon lights twinkled from the opposite shore. The numbers of the houses were absent from seven doors out of ten, but by careful counting Eltham succeeded in identifying No. 26. The bell handle hung by a foot of rusty wire, and the knocker had been wrenched off, but the application of his stick to the door brought a slatternly girl with a candle.

'John Welks? Top floor back, and you must mind the broke ballisters; but if I was you I'd go and look in at the "Chequers" before goin' all the ways up-stairs.'

Inquiry revealed that the 'Chequers' was a public-house at the river end of the Lane, and thither Eltham turned, guided by the flare from its windows. The idea of pushing his way into a tavern in a quarter like this in search of one of its habitués was distasteful, and he had to screw up his courage to cross the street. As luck would have it, however, the glass doors were thrust open as he stood hesitating on the threshold, and the man he sought came out on a blast of mingled vapours in which gin held easy prominence.

'Here, Welks,' he said, as the man passed him, 'I want to speak to you.'

Mr Welks required some seconds to realise who addressed him. Richard Eltham, in his mind, was associated exclusively with the office in the Girdleton Gallery and the weekly pay-day. 'Wot! Mr Eltham! Wot's up now? Did you 'ear as I'd got the sick to-day?'

'Yes, I heard you had been discharged, and I thought very unjustly.'

Mr Welks smote his left palm with his right fist and vowed, with adjectives, that it was 'a seannalus piecer injustice, so it was.'

'Come with me and tell me all you can; I've come down here to see you about it. Where can we go to have a quiet talk?'

Mr Welks' idea of a suitable retreat for a confidential talk was the bar of the 'Chequers'; alternatively, that of the 'Hoop and Toy.' Eltham, mindful of his one whiff of 'Chequers' atmosphere, declined both and suggested a seat on the low wall, which held the road along the river-side above the tidal mud; it was a warm night, he delicately urged, and pleasanter out of doors than in.

'Mr Eltham,' said Welks solemnly, as he sat down, 'if it was my last word in breathing life, that there message what that there boy brought me Sunday morning was a plant—a ocs,' by which last word he doubtless meant hoax.

'What boy? What message?' inquired Eltham eagerly, his heart beginning to beat. 'Tell me exactly what happened. I did not arrive this morning till you and Jackson had gone, you know.'

Mr Welks' narrative style was discursive and disjointed, but fluent; patience and attention, however, eventually placed Eltham in possession of a story which he was repeatedly assured was 'the truth, the 'ole truth, and nothing but the truth s'welp me.'

Welks had relieved Jackson as usual at eight o'clock, or a few minutes after, on Sunday morning. At about one, seeing the sunshine through the faulight, and craving fresh air and a glimpse of the outer world, he set one half of the great door open and drew his chair so that he could look out into the street. While he sat smoking his pipe, there came along the street a 'young boy' who asked if he were 'Mister Welks.' Receiving answer in the affirmative, the young boy gave him a letter and waited while he read it; which Welks confessed he did slowly, not being a scholar. The letter stated that Mrs Welks was taken ill, and that his presence was required at her side. For reasons detailed with minuteness, he was not surprised at this intelligence. Mr Eltham might remember that on Tuesday last the 'governor' sanctioned an advance of Welks' wages for ten shillings? Well, Mrs Welks' indisposition made that advance necessary. After consideration he determined that his obligations as husband outweighed his duty as watchman, and that the summons must be obeyed. The difficulty was the door; he could not reconcile it to his conscience to leave the door open, and if he shut it, his departure from his post must be discovered, as nobody but the master himself could open it again. He found a way out of his dilemma by offering the boy a penny to

wait inside until he returned, which offer the boy accepted. So he showed his youthful substitute how to manipulate the door handle, enjoined him under penalties not to open the door until he heard a knock, and hurried home to Horn Lane. To his extreme astonishment and dismay, Mrs Welks informed him that she, being as well as could be expected but rather low, had not sent the letter and knew nothing about it. He started back at once, wondering what trick had been played upon him, and when he reached the gallery found the door open and the boy gone.

'Gone,' concluded Mr Welks impressively, 'gone without waitin' for the brown I promised 'im. Then I *knewed* there was somethink up.'

'What did you do then?' inquired Eltham.

Finding that the boy was not anywhere about the place, Welks went to the clerks' office where the safe stood, examined the doors of that, and all the desks and drawers; no attempt had been made to tamper with anything, and Mr Girdleton's room was also undisturbed. Whatever had been the purpose of luring him away no harm seemed to have resulted, and he resolved to hold his tongue about the business. On Monday morning, however, when he answered the urgent summons which came from the office, and heard what had been done to the great picture, he was 'that put about,' he made a clean breast of his failure in duty to Mr Girdleton; and was dismissed on the spot.

Welks having finished his story, expectorated, relighted his pipe, and kicked his heels against the wall.

'Have you got the letter the boy brought you?' asked Eltham.

'No, sir; I threw it into the fire when I heard my missus hadn't wrote it. I was rare savage being 'ocused, I was.'

Eltham made a gesture of disappointment which passed unnoticed in the dark.

'That's a pity. Should you know the boy who brought it?'

'I should,' replied the man with violence, 'and he'd remember me if I ketches hold of him.'

It further transpired that Welks had not seen the boy before, so far as he remembered; he was not a boy who lived in the Lane or its neighbourhood. Welks had lived here himself for twelve years and knew every inhabitant by sight.

Eltham began to feel that an amateur detective's way is not all plain-sailing. He thought a while and then asked from which direction the boy came and what was he like. Welks' reply was prompt enough, but not helpful: the boy came round the corner from Conduit Street, he was a young boy respectably dressed in a clean collar: he had red hair; he did not look as though he came from any distance.

'The boy is the link,' decided Eltham, not very hopefully. 'I suppose, Welks,' he continued aloud, 'that as you were only discharged this morning, you have nothing to do? Nothing, and no prospect of anything? Well, you must help me for the present; the first thing we have to do is to discover this boy. Here's five shillings to keep you going for a

day or two. You spend your time walking about every back street and mews within half a mile of Bond Street; watch the board schools when they are coming out. When you find the boy, you must follow him and see where he lives, and then come to me. When you have found that boy, Welks, I'll undertake to see you righted.'

The man pocketed the silver, saying he would tramp the streets till he walked the boots off his feet; and Eltham, hoping that his ally might at least be depended on to prosecute what he realised was hardly more than a wildgoose chase, went his way homeward. The difference between Welks' story and that which held currency in the office had struck him forcibly at the moment, but with a singleness of purpose, really praiseworthy in a novice, he had put the discrepancy aside while he worked out his own line; and now it recurred to him, he did not attach much importance to it. Mr Girdleton always made a point of flattering representatives of the press, but nobody knew better than he where to stop; and it was plain to the meanest intelligence that if Welks' story were to get into the papers the operations of the detective entrusted with the task of tracing the criminal might be seriously embarrassed. It was a little odd that Welks had not yet been approached by the police, for he would surely have mentioned it had they come to question him; but perhaps they had begun with Jackson or had found another clue which they were following up.

He got up earlier than usual the next morning; he was anxious to see the morning paper, and, moreover, meant to go early to Bond Street, for he was very certain there was hard work ahead for the gallery staff. His *Standard* gave ample indication that the 'Girdleton Gallery Outrage' was to be the sensation of the time. The second leading article was devoted to the subject, and heavy headlines drew attention to a column and a half of matter, descriptive, indignant, reminiscent and conjectural. The account was so far accurate that it told Eltham nothing that he did not know already, and perusal left him with a grateful sense of superiority in virtue of the knowledge he had obtained from Welks. He was at Bond Street by a quarter past nine, but early as it was he found people there before him: a score or two of city men who had been driven from their breakfast tables by the report in the morning paper; a dozen country cousins congratulating themselves on their luck in being able to include such a sight as this in their hard day's pleasure: half-a-dozen press artists who had paid their shillings like men, without waiting for some one having authority to come and accord the customary 'pass'; and lastly, waiting in the hall, a few enterprising photographers seeking permission to 'take a negative.' The 'boom' had fairly begun, and from half-past ten the entrance hall was crammed with visitors seeking admission.

Eltham watched the crowd with special interest; his employer's family rarely came to the gallery, but they would surely not fail to-day; Mrs and Miss Girdleton had called when the Raphael was first exhibited six weeks ago,

and might safely be expected to come and see its present sad condition. The clerks' office was divided from the entrance hall by a glass screen through which the heads of people could be seen by standing on the rung of a high stool, and Eltham's fellow-clerks found occasion to make frequent inquiries concerning the comfort of his seat; after noon had struck, he could not concentrate his attention on his work for five consecutive minutes.

Mrs Girdleton did come eventually, but alone.

'Oh, the crush!' she exclaimed, as she turned into the office and sank into a chair. 'I'll wait here for a minute, Mr Eltham, if you'll kindly ask my husband if I may go through his room; he won't welcome me, if he is engaged.'

The clerks' office communicated with the proprietor's, which in its turn had a private entrance to the gallery. Eltham ascertained that Mr Girdleton was engaged, and nothing loth informed the lady, who declared her intention of waiting as she wished to see her husband.

'It's a long time since we've seen you on a Sunday, Mr Eltham,' she observed, smiling dubiously. She was an amiable but rather silly woman, who still made the most of lingering traces of beauty; she stood in profound awe of her spouse, and took a pride in the circumstance that was apt to be embarrassing. Her view of Eltham's attachment to her daughter differed from that adopted by Mr Girdleton. 'The son of a clergyman,' she used to assure her intimates in a confidential undertone, 'a rector who was an Honourable in his own right, being the son of a nobleman. Fact.'

'How is Miss Girdleton?' inquired Eltham, making a creditable effort to speak of her as a mere acquaintance.

Mrs Girdleton's weak smile of meaning said plainly that she understood and sympathised: she leaned forward to say that Annie had gone yesterday to pay a visit to her aunt at Chester.

'Annie's got a will of her own,' she continued, dropping her voice lower, with a glance at the door of her husband's room. 'and things have not been going smoothly at home of late'—she paused to nod and smile her watery smile—'and so I persuaded father to let her go away for a bit. So I saw her off yesterday by the two o'clock train; first class and everything comfortable.'

'Does she intend to pay a long visit?' asked Eltham, for the sake of saying something; Miss Girdleton's absence from London did not affect him now.

'I expect she will be away until after we move into our new house. You knew we had taken a new house in Queen's Square, Bayswater?'

Eltham was aware that the change had been mooted.

'I hope we shall soon see you there,' whispered Mrs Girdleton, with a crop of smiling nods; 'the longest lane has a turning. Does she write?' and she raised her eyebrows.

Eltham replied that Mr Girdleton had exacted from him a promise not to correspond.

'He made her promise too; but there's been so much crossness and scolding lately, that I thought she might have. I should have, I know.'

The rattle of the door handle made her start up quickly, but, her husband's visitors coming out, she covered her confusion by going into his room.

'We are providing rare sport for the private inquiry agencies,' said Mr Girdleton, coming into the clerks' office after seeing his wife through to the gallery, 'but I don't think it will help matters to encourage them all to go a-hunting for the rascal. If any more of them ask to see me, Eltham, just say that the Scotland Yard people have taken the business in hand, and that we have given all the information we possess to the newspapers; they can refer to them. We shall have the detectives complaining that their investigations are hindered if we encourage outsiders.'

Eltham listened, wondering how his own 'private inquiry' would be regarded by his employer if he happened to hear of it.

'I suppose you have not heard anything from the police yet, Mr Girdleton?'

'You don't know the ways of Scotland Yard if you imagine they could have anything to report in twenty-four hours, my boy.'

Fear lest the police should be beforehand with him was the uppermost feeling in Eltham's mind. He was working against overwhelming odds; the detectives had time and experience to give to the task, and, no doubt, all the money they required: whereas he had to rely upon the exertions of a not very intelligent elderly man who, to use a mild expression, was not a teetotaler. He wished he had thought last night of stimulating Welks with promises of reward if he succeeded in finding that all-important boy. If the detectives got hold of him first, he might bid Welks cease his endeavours.

Mr Girdleton was justified of his decision to see no more people who sought information as the preliminary step to competing for that five thousand pounds. Ex-detectives who had retired from 'the force' to set up business on their own account, came in that day at the rate of three an hour. It was a revelation to the gallery staff, that London contained so many of the fraternity, and Eltham's hopes sank lower as each went out leaving as a legacy his supposition that he must do the best he could without the assistance he had a right to expect.

'I b'lieve it's one of them chaps as did it to make a job for his pals,' was the indignant comment of Peters the commissionaire as he ushered out the ninth.

And all day long till after seven o'clock the entrance hall was thronged with well-dressed crowds, pressing forward to the turnstiles whose clacking never ceased. You may see a whole Raphael for nothing any day you choose to go to the National Gallery, but a work by the great master with a hole in it—a hole maliciously and mysteriously cut—is a sight to be seen once in a century. Mr Girdleton was fortunate—if the word be not misused in such a connection—in the hour of his misfortune.

Parliament was sitting, but the debates were exceptionally intelligent and dull; no horrible murder justified six-inch letters on the evening bills, and they that put asunder over against Temple Bar had nothing before them that called for the semblance of a verbatim report. A sensation was absolutely called for to give a spice to life; and the mutilator of Mr Girdleton's Raphael supplied it.

'Ruined it may be,' said Peters each afternoon as he staggered into the office, laden with small sacks of silver drawn from the glutted turnstiles, 'but if it's money we want, give me a pieter with a 'ole in it to make our fortunes. Shall I call a keb, sir? It's bank time.'

MONEY AND MUSIC.

By J. CUTHBERT HADDEN.

A CERTAIN eminent living composer, speaking from his own experience, has told us that poverty is a spur to musical genius. It is to the poor in this world's goods that he would turn for artistic greatness. The poor work hard, they study seriously. Rich people are apt to apply themselves lightly to music, and to abandon the painful toil to which every strong musician must submit unceasingly and without complaint. No doubt there is a measure of truth about this view of the case. Russell Lowell was wont to say that the two chief sources of inspiration are a full mind and an empty pocket; and although the empty pocket will not help the musician greatly in these days of push and advertising enterprise, it seems to have been at least no hindrance to the composers and artists who lived in the 'good old times.'

Nothing, indeed, is more sadly instructive than to compare the figures earned by present day musicians of the first rank with the sums which their predecessors, the men whom we regard as the classics of music, earned by the exercise of their art. Before the time of Handel there is practically no record of musicians having been paid at all; and from the fact that they all died poor men, we may reasonably infer that they had either special facilities for getting rid of money, or that they had very little money to get rid of. Even Handel, had it not been for his oratorios and his operative speculations, would have lived and died as poor as the proverbial church mouse. Walsh, his publisher, paid him pitiful prices for his operas. For at least eleven of these works he received no more than twenty-five guineas each; and the largest sum he was ever paid was only £105, which he got for *Alexander's Feast*. It must not be thought from these small prices that the composer's works did not sell; on the contrary, they always found a ready market, and proved a great source of profit to the publisher. From the proceeds of his first opera, *Rinaldo*, Walsh netted a profit of over £1500, whereupon Handel jocularly remarked to the

musicseller: 'Well, *you* shall compose the next opera, and I will publish it.' Handel, as everybody knows, lost a fortune in trying to establish Italian opera in London; and although he subsequently more than recouped himself by his oratorios, it was not the publisher but the public who put it in his power to do this.

Even when we come down to the time of Mozart, we do not find that the claim of the brain-worker to a fair wage had been recognised. It almost staggers one to recall the fact that *Don Giovanni* brought to its composer no more than £20. For *The Magic Flute* he was paid just one hundred ducats, and yet the manager of the theatre at which the opera was first produced made a fortune out of it. No wonder Mozart had to be laid in a pauper's grave, the very site of which is unknown to this day! Schubert fared even worse. Some of his magnificent songs sold for less than a shilling, and at his decease it was difficult to raise enough money to bury him. Haydn's income would to-day be deemed small by a player in the theatre orchestra, and his 'estate' was almost a minus quantity. Weber, who died seventy-one years ago, received less than £800 in all for his *Freischütz*, one of the most popular operas ever written; while from his five other operas he made only £1600 altogether. By *The Bohemian Girl* Balfe gained less than £1500, although the 'Marble Halls' ballad in that very popular work put some £3000 in the pockets of the publishers.

It is not until we come down to quite recent times that we find the composer satisfactorily rewarded for his work. Wagner was the first of the fortunate men. It is true that in his early years his earnings were very small; but when he had made a name for himself he was able to command very substantial sums. He sold the copyright—not the performing right—of his *Parsifal* for about £9000, which was perhaps the largest sum ever paid to a composer for a single opera; while for the four dramas in *Der Ring des Nibelungen* he was paid £2000. From the American ladies who wished an orchestral march for a centenary celebration he obtained a little over £1000; and it is calculated that his regular income during the last years of his life was about £5000 per annum. With all this, Wagner was very often in difficulties; but he explained the matter himself when he said: 'By nature I am luxurious, prodigal, extravagant, much more than Sardanapalus and all the old emperors put together.' Gounod got £4000 for his oratorio, *The Redemption*, and from an English publisher too; and Brahms is said to receive £1000 for the score of a symphony. Sir Arthur Sullivan composes an opera score in two months, and the reward is usually about £12,000 for the first year alone. As we write, he is said to be preparing a ballet for the Alhambra, for which he is to be paid £2000. Sir Arthur is believed to draw about £30,000 a year from his comic operas alone. A pretty change this

since the time when Dr Arne sold his *Artaxerxes* for sixty guineas! Mascagni's pecuniary enrichment from his *Cavalleria Rusticana* up to the beginning of 1895 is put down at about £18,000; and Humperdinck made some £10,000 out of *Hänsel and Gretel* within a twelvemonth. In England the terms for serious work are not very high. Oratorios and cantatas are written mostly for the great Festivals, and the sum paid very seldom exceeds one hundred guineas. Festival committees reckon a great deal upon the 'honour' done to a composer in inviting him to write; and the composer who is not satisfied with that and his hundred guineas must look to his royalties for the rest.

It is, however, perhaps in the domain of song-writing that the most interesting figures fall to be quoted. In this branch of composition, more than in any other, a success often comes quite unexpectedly, and sometimes the poor composer, if he has parted with his copyright absolutely, is excluded from any share in its pecuniary rewards. Some of the veteran Henry Russell's figures are very instructive in this connection. For 'Cheer, boys, cheer,' for example, he received only £11 in all; for 'There's a good time coming,' £2; for 'The Maniac,' £1; for 'Man the Lifeboat,' 10s.; and so on. Yet these songs, in the matter of popularity, held the field for many years, and the sums which the publishers realised from them must have been very large. Again, take 'My Pretty Jane,' one of the most profitable songs to the publishers ever written. Some years ago it brought over £2000; yet all that Mr Fitzball, the writer of the words, and Sir Henry Bishop, the composer of the music, jointly received did not exceed £200. Fitzball, to be sure, declared that it took him just ten minutes to write; and Bishop thought so little of his own setting that he had thrown the manuscript into the waste-paper basket, from which it was fished out by the manager of Vauxhall Gardens. But even so, the composer was surely entitled to a proportionate reward with the publisher; and it is not consoling to recall the circumstance that Bishop died almost a pauper.

Other examples of the kind might be multiplied indefinitely. Everybody remembers 'Grandfather's Clock,' a song which was the 'rage' for many a day. Thousands of pounds were made out of it by the musicsellers, and the copyright sold only recently for £410; but the composer got only a few shillings, and ultimately died in destitution. The same thing happened in the case of Alexander Hume's beautiful setting of Burns's 'Afton Water.' It is said he did not receive even the traditional guinea. The composer of 'She wore a Wreath of Roses' sold his copyright for fifty shillings, and soon after had the doubtful pleasure of seeing it repurchased by a second publisher for £500. George Barker obtained only forty shillings for 'The White Squall,' though Messrs Cramer afterwards paid him £100; and for that immensely popular song, 'Kathleen Mavourneen,' the composer, Mr F. N. Crouch, received just £5. Mr Brinsley Richards sold 'God bless the Prince of Wales' outright for £20; but the publishers, finding the song a success, subsequently made him a present of 100 guineas—not a large

sum in the circumstances. 'Nancy Lee' was another 'Grandfather's Clock' as to popularity, but in this case the composer fared somewhat better. The publisher at first thought £10 a great deal too much for the song, but it is generally understood that subsequently he came to pay pretty nearly £10,000 in the way of royalties to Mr Michael Maybrick. Mr Wellington Guernsey offered his 'Alice, where art thou,' to several music publishers for a five-pound note, but these men of wisdom refused the bargain, only to find, to their sore dismay, that the song eventually attained a sale of between two and three hundred thousand copies. Such cases are constantly occurring. One of the most melancholy men the writer ever saw was an ex-publisher who had declined 'Tommy, make room for your Uncle,' by which a rival made several thousand pounds. When, in 1885, Mr Henry Leslie, the conductor of the famous choir which bore his name, wrote his trio 'O memory,' he offered it to Mr Chappell, but that gentleman refused to take it even as a gift. Next year Mr Leslie issued it at his own risk, and in 1890 he was able to say that, 37,000 copies having been sold, the trio had netted him the nice little sum of £1150. At the same date Mr Leslie's popular 'Speed on, my Bark, speed on,' had brought him in £570. Of course, one has a certain sympathy with the music-publisher in this matter of low prices and cautious dealing. The vogue of a song is often a mere question of chance; and if a publisher sometimes finds himself making money where he least anticipated, he not seldom also finds the tables turned upon himself. Moreover, the agonies of the sensitive who are compelled to listen to some songs *ad nauseam* may perhaps serve as a set-off to the small profits of the old-time musician!

But it is the popular writers of to-day who make the large incomes out of their songs. Thackeray used to say it was amazing how much he received for indifferent work when his reputation was established, compared with what he could command for really first-rate writing when he was still an unknown man. It is apparently the same with the song-composer: once make a 'hit' and the publisher is ready to accept anything—and to pay handsomely for it too. Gounod, who obtained but £100 for the English rights of *Faust*, received in his last years from £80 to £100 for every song he wrote. Sir Arthur Sullivan was content to part with his first ballads for a few pounds—he sold his popular 'Hush thee! my babe,' for £5; a successful man, he can now command £700 down for one song; while from 'The Lost Chord' alone it is said that he has realised over £10,000. Signor Tosti, the composer of 'For ever and for ever,' whose first manuscripts were 'declined with thanks,' can now command £250 for a song; and as much may be obtained by Mr Milton Wellings, Mr Molloy, Mr Cowen, and a few others now at the top of the ladder. Frank L. Moir made over £2000 out of his popular song 'Only once more,' and it was stated not long ago that for three songs Mr Marzials receives from a firm of publishers some £2000 per annum. Michael Watson's publisher said he could always rely on any-

thing he wrote selling, and he generally paid him £75 down for a song. Nor was this a very high figure, considering that the copyright of Mr Watson's much-sung 'Anchored' realised in 1894 the record sum (for a song) of £1212. In these figures the writer of the words does not usually participate at all. He sells his wares right away, and has done with them. Mr Oxenford and Mr Weatherley often get as much as twenty-five guineas for three small verses; less well-known writers get two guineas; and the man who is not known at all must content himself with half the latter sum. Writers of dance music, especially of waltzes, make large incomes out of their works. The Strauss family have realised a fabulous fortune in this way; and it was reported a year or two back that two English ladies were drawing £1200 per annum each from a couple of waltzes. It has to be noted, too, that most of our popular song and dance tune composers, in addition to a certain sum down, reserve to themselves the right of a royalty on every copy sold. In this way their income from a particular composition may last for many years. In spite of these long prices which we have quoted, the publisher generally manages to thrive and even wax fat. When Mr John Boosey died some years ago, he left £74,000 behind him; and this was small compared with the wealth of Mr Robert Cocks, whose personalty alone was nearly £200,000, the real property being probably worth more than as much again. It will thus be seen that music hath charms, very substantial charms, for the publisher, as well as for the select few among the composers.

In these later days the recital pianist, among instrumental performers, is quite leading the way in the matter of figures. Paderewski is, of course, first. When he was in America in 1893 he made £35,000 out of sixty-four recitals, which, allowing two-and-a-half hours for each concert, means £3, 13s. for every minute he was at the piano! Just before the Chicago Exhibition opened, Rubinstein was offered £25,000 for fifty recitals in the States, and at that time this sum was quite unprecedented. It was, indeed, very much more than Rubinstein earned on his first American tour, which brought him only £40 per concert. But pianists' prices have risen greatly in recent years. The best 'house' that Von Bülow ever had was £200; but Rubinstein got a £1000 audience into St James's Hall in June 1887; and even Hoffman, the prodigy pianist, who had only £70 on his first appearance, attracted no less than £650 to the same hall in the Jubilee year. M. de Pachmann, again, touched £400 as his best individual effort in London. Compare these figures with the fee of twenty-four guineas paid to 'the little marvel' Mozart when he appeared before George III. and his consort in 1764; and even with the £96 which poor Weber, dying on his feet at the time, made out of a benefit concert in London in 1826. So late as 1848, Chopin, dying slowly too, received only £60 for a couple of piano recitals at Manchester, the identical sum which he made out of a single recital in Glasgow the same year.

The gradual rise in the payments made to

singers has more than kept pace with the prices paid to composers. A look through the treasurer's accounts of the old Sacred Harmonic Society would confirm this statement in a very certain and interesting way. For example, at the Christmas performance of *The Messiah* in December 1853, Miss Birch was paid eight guineas; Madame Sainton-Dolby, eight guineas; Mr and Mrs Lockey together, sixteen guineas; and Mr Weiss, the composer of *The Village Blacksmith*, six guineas. At the performance of *Israel in Egypt* in the same year, Mr Sims Reeves took fifteen guineas; Carl Fornes, ten guineas; and Madame Sainton-Dolby, eight guineas. Nine years afterwards, in December 1862, for singing in *The Messiah*, Madame Rudersdorff was paid ten guineas; Mr Henry Haigh, eight guineas; while Madame Sainton-Dolby's terms had risen to ten guineas. It need hardly be said that concert vocalists now in full demand would laugh at such fees. Some years ago, when Mr Toole was returning thanks to an audience in the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, he referred to the circumstance that he and Sims Reeves and Henry Irving had all at an early stage of their careers sought professional honours in the Scottish capital. The salaries of the three friends, according to Mr Toole, were then: the singer, thirty shillings; the comedian, forty shillings; the tragedian, fifty shillings each per week. 'Of course,' added Mr Toole, 'we get more now.'

No doubt of it! Mr Sims Reeves has had as much as £120 for one evening; and on one memorable occasion, when he took a so-called 'final farewell,' at the Albert Hall, he drew nearly £2000, with the aid of Adelaide Neilson. Mr Edward Lloyd, who is practically Mr Sims Reeves' successor, averages sixty guineas a concert, and about £300 or £400 for a Festival engagement. For a recent tour in the United States he was paid £200 per night. Mr Santley's *donneur* for an ordinary concert engagement is about fifty guineas. When he was engaged at the first Leeds Festival in 1858, he sang in eight concerts for £42; but in 1880, when he had reached the zenith of his fame, he demanded 250 guineas for the same work. Later on, the Festival committee found they could dispense with him at three of the concerts, and with true Yorkshire shrewdness they asked him to accept 200 guineas. Whereupon the eminent baritone expressed himself as 'grossly insulted,' broke his engagement, and has never appeared at Leeds since. Madame Albani sings generally for £150; but she too has her special Festival terms. For the Leeds Festival of 1877 Tietjens had been engaged at a fee of 500 guineas (she stipulated that no other artiste was to receive more!), but she died before the date of the Festival, and Madame Albani was chosen to fill her place. Albani insisted upon 550 guineas, in order to take precedence of the dead artiste; but she promised to give, and did give, fifty guineas to the local medical charities out of the fee. Albani's terms at the last Festival (1895) were 400 guineas for four appearances.

Tenor vocalists are specially favoured in the matter of payments. A Spanish tenor, who had originally been a blacksmith, died some years ago worth £160,000, all made out of his

voice. The *di majores* in that line at the present time are M. Jean de Reszké and the Italian tenor Tamagno, both well known to operatic audiences in England. In 1894 the latter made £20,000 off a six months' season at Buenos Ayres, and some years ago he had an engagement at Rio Janeiro for £400 a night, at the rate of ten performances a month during the operatic season. Exactly twenty years ago, when he made his debut as a baritone at Drury Lane, De Reszké's salary could hardly have exceeded £10 a week. At the time of writing, it is being stated 'on good authority' that he is being paid at the Opera at the rate of £200 per night, and if the figures are correct, the fee is probably the highest ever reached by an operatic tenor during a London season. For his farewell series of performances at Covent Garden in 1871, Mario was paid a lump sum, which averaged, we believe, about £150 a night, but £200 is quite high-water mark. When in America a year or two ago, De Reszké got £400 for contributing two songs at a private entertainment! But they can do wonderful things in America. Even in the churches the leading singers are paid what in England would be regarded as extravagant salaries for the same duties. In Dr Paxton's church in New York, for example, the leading soprano has a salary of £900 a year; and in the great majority of churches the soloists get from £80 to £100 per annum. These exceptionally high salaries are not due so much to the wealth of the general body of worshippers as to the presence in the congregation of some wealthy individual who is specially interested in the music.

Of course, in this matter of money and music, no one needs to be told at this time of day that Madame Patti is far and away the best remunerated artiste in the world. Patti was the first prima-donna who demanded in Paris a nightly salary of 10,000 francs. When it was conceded to her, her rivals preferred the same claims; so that, to keep her supremacy in the operatic market, she persistently raised her prices to 15,000 francs, which sum she received for each of the three concerts she gave in one week at the Eden Theatre. And yet Patti began modestly enough. When she made her debut in London in 1862, she was engaged for five years at a salary of £150 a month for the first year, £200 for the second, £250 for the third, £290 for the fourth, and £400 for the fifth year, the lady to sing twice a week. Until her marriage to the Marquis de Caux, Patti never received from Covent Garden more than £120 per night. Considering that the diva gets £800 per concert in London, and that an American contract recently gave her a minimum salary of £1200 per night, plus expenses and half of all the gross receipts over £2400, times have undoubtedly changed. During the past ten or twelve years Madame Patti's annual average has been about £40,000. To the non-professional mind this may seem out of all proportion to the value given and received. But of course the singer takes quite another view of the matter. When Gabrielli visited Russia in 1768, and Catharine II. wished to have her services, the vocalist asked a fee of 5000 ducats. 'Far too much,' said the Empress,

amazed. 'Why! that is more than I pay my field-m Marshals.' The retort was inevitable. 'Then let your field-m Marshals sing for you,' replied Gabrielli.

CHOPPING OIL IN THE BIGHT OF BIAFRA.

By F. HARVEY MAJOR.

OF all the various methods ever devised by the law makers of civilised nations for the purpose of collecting debts, surely none can approach in simplicity the mode of procedure in vogue in the oil-rivers of Western Africa until a very few years ago.

'Chopping oil,' as it was called, is a term which would convey no meaning to the average commercial man accustomed to the lengthy routine of our English law-courts. But West African traders understand it, and many men still amongst us who, fifteen or twenty years ago, resided amidst the miasma-laden swamps fringing the low-lying coast of the Bight of Biafra—such men, when spinning their yarns in congenial company at home in Old England, round a good roaring fire, enjoying their grog and tobacco, recall with a thrill scenes of excitement in which they have participated when 'chopping.' It is a rule with merchants when engaging the services of an agent to take charge of one of their factories on the coast, to insert a clause in the agreement stipulating that he shall give no 'trust'—that is, commercial credit—to any of the natives with whom he may do business, and providing that, in the event of his doing so, his employers shall hold a lien upon his salary, commission, or other emoluments, to the extent of any loss which may be incurred by his infringement of instructions.

When entering into this arrangement, both parties to the agreement, at the time of which I write, knew that under the then existent conditions, trade could not possibly be carried on without a large amount of 'trust' being continually given out; and therefore it behoved the trader to find some simple but tolerably efficient method of recovering his outstanding accounts prior to the expiration of his term of service. So as soon as it became known that he was about to return home, every chief who was indebted to him packed up his belongings, assembled his men, and took himself and them off to his 'barracoon,' or farm, where his slaves were bred, and his produce, palm-oil, ebony, &c., was collected. These 'barracoons' it was the fortune of very few Englishmen to be allowed to visit, for it was obviously of the first importance to the native chief that the whereabouts and resources of his 'barracoon' should remain a secret.

However, the white traders found a way out of the difficulty. By appealing to the king's cupidity, they introduced a system enabling

them to get their 'trust' in expeditiously, furnishing at the same time a new and exciting sport, and giving his sable majesty the means of considerably augmenting his private purse.

Say Mr So-and-so is desirous of closing his 'venture' (the name applied to his term of agency) and return to civilisation for a spell. In the first place he ceases to give any of his cargo out on trust, and this step at once proclaims his intentions to his astute debtors, who hurry off up-country at top speed. He now goes to the king, and for a varying amount (calculated at about five per cent. upon the value of the trust he has out) purchases a 'ju-ju,' or 'fetish,' which confers upon him the rights and privileges of a chief. As such rights depend in a general way upon the might of each chief, those of the white man, supported as they are by the combined strength of the whole European community, are practically incontestable.

He now levies upon any native produce he may find *a float*, on the river or tributary creeks, that is not actually under the protection of another white man—that is, not already alongside a trading ship, or a traders' wharf. He takes forcible possession, often only after a desperate struggle, carefully tests and measures the oil so distrained upon, and gives the owner an order for the same quantity upon one of his absent debtors. This order the victimised native executes himself by force if he is powerful enough, otherwise he takes it to the king, who transacts the business for him, charging a 'custom,' or commission, equal to ten per cent.

It occasionally happened that two white men would be 'chopping' at the same time, and then the excitement was fast and furious as the rivals scoured the river and creeks at night in their efforts to secure oil. The operations frequently extend over several months, inasmuch as the natives would get wary in looking after their goods. Betting ran high as to the success of the rival traders.

Some five-and-twenty years ago there was a trader in Old Calabar, whom I shall call Fielding, for the very good journalistic reason that it was not his name. He was a man of particularly hasty temper; and drinking brandy to excess, as he did, any amiability he might have possessed in his younger days had become so saturated by his fiery potations as to have entirely lost its virtue. He treated his krooboy with the greatest cruelty, flogging them with his heavy twisted rhinoceros hide whip on the slightest pretence; and his behaviour to the natives was such that many times he had been warned by his fellow-traders not to trust himself in their hands under circumstances which would give them a chance to gratify their revenge. One man especially he had been cautioned against. This was one Black Andam, a savage even amongst savages. He was a chief by right of birth, but had lost all status with his tribe through his vicious habits. Having no property, he existed as best he could by pillaging and murdering the weaker members of neighbouring tribes when opportunity offered, and by acting as scout, or spy, when any trader was 'chopping;' for bringing information as to

where oil might be lying, he would always get a 'dash,' or present.

Fielding had once detected Black Andam in the act of pilfering some trifling article on board his ship, and had tied him up to a pump wheel and flogged him, laughing at Black Andam's threats to pay him off for the indignity some day. Fielding's 'venture' was nearly up, and he commenced chopping. Representing one of the principal houses engaged in the trade, he did a large business, and consequently gave an extensive 'trust;' so he was naturally very keen in closing his accounts.

One night about ten o'clock he returned on board his ship much elated after 'chopping' three puncheons of oil, and, with unusual generosity, invited his clerk, a young fellow named Ward, to join him in a glass of brandy. After the two had consumed half a bottle, he ordered Ward to turn in, and settled down to continue his orgie *solus*. He was well into the second bottle when a canoe came alongside, and Black Andam mounted the accommodation ladder and stepped on to the poop.

'What thing you want here, you black devil?' said Fielding, seizing a revolver menacingly.

'I come for tell you I done savey five puncheons. He be in Monkey Creek, and s'pose you come one time (now), you fit to chop 'em, for only two men live for canoe with 'em,' was the reply.

Fielding, ripe for anything after the quantity of liquor he had taken, said he would go at once; and Ward, who had been aroused by Black Andam's coming, when he heard the decision, ordered a gig to be lowered into the water and manned. No doubt, Fielding would have made use of a gig had his orders not been anticipated; but flying into a fit of drunken rage, he turned to Ward and asked what he meant by giving orders aboard the ship without instructions? Ward replied that he knew the gig would be wanted and only ordered it to save time; but Fielding, from sheer obstinacy, now signified his determination to go in Black Andam's canoe, and told Ward to retire to his room, threatening to put him in irons if he interfered again; then, having put on a pair of long boots and a big coat, he took a stiff tumbler of neat brandy and followed Black Andam down the ladder. The canoe, a small one, was an old patched-up concern, having only four men to paddle it, and when Fielding and Black Andam took their seats amidships, there was not more than three or four inches of gunnel above water. Fielding lit a cigar, and the canoe pushed off into the darkness. The strokes of the paddles had scarcely died away in the distance before the gig, with muffled oars, and in charge of a thoroughly reliable krooboy, was sent off in pursuit by Ward, whose instructions were that it should keep within call but out of sight of the canoe, unless anything suspicious was heard, when it was to dash up and act as might be required. Ward then turned in and went to sleep.

About three o'clock in the morning, Fielding's gig ran alongside the ship of a trader named Hartley, and the head krooboy going on board, asked to see the master at once. He was awakened,

and shocked beyond measure at the boy's report, which was to the effect that after leaving his ship he soon overtook the canoe, which he followed a little distance astern, but still close enough to hear Fielding laughing and talking with Black Andam. They proceeded about five or six miles down the river, when suddenly a scuffle was heard, then a shot, followed by a fearful shriek from Fielding. The gig dashed forward full on top of the swamped canoe, but the only man they could find was Black Andam, who was holding on to the canoe with one hand whilst he brandished Fielding's revolver in the other. He was secured and tied up in the bottom of the gig, which, after cruising about for some time without finding any trace of Fielding or the other four men, then made for the nearest ship.

Black Andam was taken aboard Hartley's ship, where his lashings were exchanged for heavy irons, and he was locked up in the fore peak, Hartley going in Fielding's gig to break the news to Ward. Ward was noted for his coolness under all circumstances, but Hartley, when he awoke him and told the news, was not prepared for his remark, 'Good gracious! Hartley, old fellow, you don't say so? and he had my keys in his pocket!'

A 'palaver' was held to discuss Fielding's death, but the affair remained a mystery.

Black Andam was handed over to be dealt with by the king, but had the terrible fate for which he was to be reserved been known, the traders would certainly have liberated him. King Archibong was about to build a new house, so he consecrated it by digging a kind of cellar under the principal apartment, and immuring Black Andam in it alive with a supply of provisions and water sufficient to last him for about a month. It is said that the screams, curses, and groans of the miserable wretch were heard for several weeks. Whatever the extent of his guilt during life, no one can think of his fearful end without a feeling of pity.

THE UGANDA RAILWAY.

THE interest recently excited in Uganda, and the construction of a line of railway opening up the country, now about to be vigorously pushed forward, calls attention both to the district in question and to the new means of access to it. Into a descriptive account of Uganda itself it is foreign to our present purpose to enter, our intention being to confine ourselves to a succinct account of the new railway, and to dwell briefly on its more salient features and characteristics.

The assumption by Great Britain of the inland protectorate of Uganda and the basin of the Victoria Nyanza Lake, rendered imperative the formation of a railway affording direct access to the coast, the total distance from lake to ocean being a little over six hundred and fifty miles. A brief glance at the map of Africa will at once enable the route selected for the new railway to be readily followed.

From Mombasa to Tsavo, the first one hundred and forty miles is over plain land, and the formation of the line will be particularly easy. This section is covered with mimosa scrub, and includes the Taro desert, a waterless tract of sixty miles extent. The next fifty miles from Tsavo to Kibwezi is the tsetze-fly belt; but the ground is still level, and neither cuttings nor embankments will be required. Some forty miles beyond Kibwezi rolling prairies are met, and the country of the Masai is traversed.

Near Kikuyu a sharp rise commences, the rise being about six hundred feet in ten miles. This district is some six to seven thousand feet above sea-level, and is remarkably healthy. A long stretch of rolling prairie and grass land covered with game is now traversed, and no engineering difficulties are anticipated. At Kedong the gradient falls sharply. After leaving Molo, a thickly wooded country is met; and at Udoma ravine the only serious obstacle is encountered, for the ravine is three hundred feet in height and three hundred feet in width. A substantial girder bridge will be thrown across the ravine.

The next ten miles shows a rising gradient of one thousand feet through the dense Subuyu forest, the home of the savage elephant-hunting Wadarobo tribe. The line on leaving the forest enters a thickly populated and highly cultivated country, rendered somewhat difficult to traverse by the tributaries of the Nzoi River. The remainder of the route passes through an easy country until the terminus at Berkeley Bay, on the north-east shore of the lake, is gained.

The line will be constructed on what is technically known as the 'telescopic principle'—that is, it will be pushed forward from one end (the coast) only, and the rails and material will come forward along the route already laid. The estimated time for construction is four years, and the total cost will be £1,865,000. The exact gauge and weight of rails have not yet been finally decided upon; but the valuable experience already gained in India with similar lines will enable these details to be determined without difficulty. The original estimate, prepared in 1893 by Major Macdonald and Captain Pringle, gave a total cost of nearly two and a quarter millions sterling, or over £3400 per mile, which has been modified in the new design down to £2700 per mile.

Without wearying our readers with arrays of figures, we may briefly state that the working expenses are estimated at forty or fifty thousand pounds per annum, accordingly as three trains per week each way, or only one train per week each way is run. The entire journey will take eight days, and, as travelling will be only by day, strong stations, similar to those in India, will be provided for the trains to put up at nights.

Three classes of traffic will be carried—namely, goods, passenger, and Government stores traffic. In connection with the first named, it is interesting to note that the present rate of carriage by native porters for the journey is £180 per ton, a tariff which will be lowered to £17 per ton on the new railway. Some idea of the frightful cost of the present arrangement may be gathered from the fact that the carriage alone (by native

porters) of a steamer to be built on the Victoria Nyanza amounted to twelve thousand pounds. A large trade in barley, wheat, india-rubber, ivory, and coffee, as well as cotton, is anticipated, and it speaks volumes for the future of the new line that ground along the route is already being taken up.

Mr Pilkington, of the Church Missionary Society, who has long been resident in the country, says that the making of the railway will prevent a great loss of life. At present, the road to the coast is a disgrace. On his way down, he continually passed skeletons on the road, and once a corpse. His party had picked up three sick men, who had been left by caravans to die of starvation. A Government official had remarked to him that slavery was not to be compared to caravan work, which was a disgrace to civilisation. In a tract of one hundred and fifty miles of foodless desert, infested with lions and hyenas, many porters fell victims. In this direction alone the railway would be of inestimable value. According to Bishop Tucker, within the past fifteen years a peaceful and beneficent revolution has been in progress in regard to the habits and customs of the people.

Enough has been said to show that the Uganda Railway will not only open up a promising and fertile country, but that its construction cannot fail to impart an impetus to the manufacturing industries of Great Britain.

A BALLADE OF MY HOME.

SAY, where is home—by sea or land,
Bright summer fields or silent shore,
In lowly cot or mansion grand,
In years to come or days of yore?
'Tis where life's way is covered o'er
With heart's-ease, fragrant, fresh and free;
So hear my song, oft sung before—
Thy heart, dear love, is home to me.

In darkest moments when I stand
With feet most weary, heart most sore,
Thoughts often come in merry band,
True, tender dreams from memory's store,
Of long days when your clear eyes wore
The hue of skies and distant sea:
God left me then no boon to implore—
Your heart, dear love, was home to me.

Why heed the ills from Fate's stern hand,
These woes that she doth on us pour?
Life's but an inn—we, guests trepanned
To pay an austere landlord's score.
I pay it bravely and ignore
The road's mishaps—it leads to thee;
And there, by all true poet's lore,
Thy heart, dear love, is home to me.

ENVOI.

So bide we then a short while more,
Till gentle Death shall turn the key,
Swing wide at last the welcoming door,
And your dear heart be home to me.

WILFRED S. HACKETT.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 633.—VOL. XIII. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

MOTIVES AND METHODS OF AUTHORSHIP.

By G. EYRE-TODD.

ONE branch of art has been defined by Shakespeare as the holding of a mirror up to nature, and another branch has been described by Matthew Arnold as a criticism of life. Probably because it fulfils both of these definitions, the art of letters possesses a perennial interest alike for the man in the study and the man in the street. In the early periods of society, it is true, the lives of authors seem to have been but little regarded. Almost nothing is known of the personal history of Homer or of Henry the Minstrel. This, however, is most probably owing to the fact that means of record were scanty. At any rate, ever since literature became a popular possession, there has been a living and widespread interest in the circumstances of its production. Indeed at the present hour it would seem, from the list of contents of some periodicals, as if the gossip about authors and their work threatened to absorb a greater attention than the actual work itself. This interest, however, is not altogether an idle matter. The colour of an author's hair, his exact height, and what he eats for breakfast are not certainly of vital importance. But why a book was written and how it was written are points of information which frequently go far to help to a proper understanding of the work. Few therefore will deny that curiosity regarding the circumstances of literary production may be legitimate enough.

Even apart from the light which they throw upon the works to which they refer, the motives which have led to the writing of some books have been in themselves sufficiently romantic and interesting. Of the inception of *Frankenstein*, her adaptation to modern life of the ancient story of Prometheus, Mrs Shelley gives an account which, for the sake of the

persons concerned in it, cannot but possess a strong claim to regard. The summer of 1816 was cold and rainy, she records, and was passed by the small but famous party of which she was a member, in the environs of Geneva. In the evenings the company crowded round a blazing wood-fire, and amused themselves with the reading of some German ghost-stories which happened to fall into their hands. Under the influence of these, Lord Byron suggested that each of the company should write a story of the supernatural. Following up the idea, Byron himself began a story, a fragment of which he printed with his poem 'Mazeppa.' Shelley made a beginning with some account of an experience of his own early life. And Polidori set to work upon an idea he had of a skull-headed lady, whom, however, he subjected to such dreadful experiences that she was presently unfit for further use, and had to be summarily despatched. Mrs Shelley herself, for lack of a subject, was long in making a start. There were, however, she relates, many and long conversations at that time between Lord Byron and Shelley, at which she was a devout, if silent, listener. At one of these, among other subjects, the poets discussed the nature of the principle of life, and whether there was any probability of its ever being discovered and communicated. That talk lasted long into the night, and on going to bed after it, Mrs Shelley declares, she could not sleep. 'I saw,' she wrote, 'with shut eyes but acute mental vision—I saw the pale student of unhallowed arts kneeling beside the thing he had put together. I saw the hideous phantasm of a man stretched out, and then, on the working of some powerful engine, show signs of life, and stir with an uneasy, half-vital motion.' Here was the germ of a story. The dreamer awoke realistically conscious of the horrid spectre standing by her bedside, 'opening the curtains, and looking down at her with yellow, watery, but speculative eyes;' and that day she began her tale with the words, *It was on a dreary night of*

November, making little more than a transcript of the grim terrors of her dream.

Most readers also are familiar with the touching story of the production of *Rasselas* by Dr Samuel Johnson. Few who read that story would gather from its contents any inkling of the ultimate motive which lay behind the writing. The book contains the elaboration of an ideal, the working out of a theory, and might well have been the occupation of many happy hours. The circumstances of the book's production, however, were sad and grim enough. Johnson's mother had died. It was the year 1759, when the rewards of literature were still most meagre and poor, and though he was already well-known as author of *London*, the *Life of Savage*, and the great dictionary, Johnson found himself without the means of providing a decent funeral. It appears typical of the solid character of the man that he sat down, heavy no doubt of heart, but with settled purpose. Day and night his pen ran on, sketching his happy valley, and in a single week, it is said, he had produced the story of *Rasselas*, *Prince of Abyssinia*.

Much has been said of late years against the writing of novels 'with a purpose.' These lose in art, it is averred, more than they gain from didactic intention, and it is urged that the discussion of theories should be confined to the more appropriate vehicle of treatise or lecture. Nevertheless, much has been done in this age of ours by novels, and poems too, written 'with a purpose.'

Sir Walter Besant has written more than one good book of this class, and few will be found to deny that his stories have been excellent as fiction, quite apart from any intention which lay behind it. When purpose in novel-writing is mentioned, one particular romance occurs to every memory. Besant had seen with pity the misery of East London. He had seen the girls with flat chests and lack-lustre eyes; he had looked at the men, pale and spiritless. Many a mind, before the novelist's, has asked itself the true reason for this state of things; more than one means, such as the farm-colony of General Booth, has since been devised for the cure of it. The conclusion to which the novelist came was that the people lacked happiness. So he set himself to sketch a palace of rational pleasure for them. He bade the world look at these men and girls, and he sketched what might be the effect of a little joy introduced into their lives. Give these girls a little music, a little dancing—give them a lover, he said, and watch the change. Sir Walter Besant wrote *All Sorts and Conditions of Men*. He called it 'an impossible story,' but probably no work has done more to direct attention to the condition of the poor in cities. Its publication brought about an entire fashionable crusade upon the slums; and what is better, by way of practical outcome, the central feature of the story, a People's Palace, with all its adjuncts, now rises, not only in East London, but in many other cities.

Before Walter Besant, in somewhat of the same temper, came Charles Dickens. Prince of humorists as he was, and one of the warmest and kindest of hearts, the author of *David*

Copperfield was not the less a master of scathing satire. Again and again his 'novels with a purpose' taught society to sympathise with the sufferings of the poor, and more than once these same productions struck a deadly blow at the oppressions of official life and humbledom. It cannot, perhaps, be said that because of the writings of Dickens the evils of 'red-tapeism' have entirely disappeared from Government offices; but there can be no doubt that the delays of law have become infinitely less since the writing of *Little Dorrit*.

It is needless, perhaps, to cite instances in which poetry has been written with a distinctly social or political purpose, and has not the less been true poetry for the social or political effect which it has produced. Mrs Browning's 'Cry of the Children' undoubtedly helped Lord Shaftesbury to put an end to the child labour in coal-pit and factory which used to prove so fatal to its victims. And if the misery of the unnumbered London seamstresses toiling and starving under the 'sweating system' has not yet been sensibly lightened, it has at least had more eyes of sympathy turned upon it since Hood wrote his heart-moving 'Song of the Shirt.' Again, on the farther side of the Atlantic, 'Uncle Tom' promoted to an incalculable extent the abolitionist feeling; subsequently the slave-poems of Whittier, and the *Biglow Papers* of Russell Lowell at one and the same time furnished the battle-cry of the Northern movement, and became the masterpieces of their authors.

It is not to be denied, however, that a motive which enters largely into the writing of books, at least nowadays, is the pecuniary one. Literature has become a profession like the other professions, and men are found to enter it for the sake of the loaves and fishes. And probably it may be said with truth that never was literature so well paid as now. It is true that Sir Walter Scott in the beginning of the century received large sums for his works; but he was almost the only writer of his time who did so. At the present day, more than a dozen authors might be named offhand who count on receiving for each work a cheque of at least four figures. Nevertheless, it is safe to say that no really great work was ever produced from this sordid motive alone. There never was a great book written, it has been truly said, without a great enthusiasm behind it.

The mere accidents, however, by which some books have come into public vogue, have been not a little remarkable. *Lorna Doone*, for instance, as every one possibly is not aware, threatened for some time to be an utter failure. Notwithstanding its exquisite qualities, it lay for several months all but dead on the publishers' shelves. Then the marriage of the Princess Louise occurred, and the similarity between the name of her husband, the Marquis of Lorne, and that of the heroine of the book, somehow attracted the public eye, with the consequence that the stock of *Lorna Doone* was immediately exhausted, and new editions called for. Sooner or later, however, it can hardly be doubted, the merits of the romance must have been discovered without this adventitious aid, and the book have achieved success upon its intrinsic worth.

Of late years there have been many apparently

sudden and phenomenal successes in the arena of authorship, none of which probably has been either quite so sudden or so phenomenal as it appeared. The list includes Mr J. M. Barrie, Mr Rudyard Kipling, Mr Stanley Weyman, and 'Ian Maclaren.' The case of Mr Barrie is well known. *Auld Licht Idylls* and *A Window in Thrums*, with which he achieved success, were by no means the author's first ventures into literature. It came out afterwards that there had been at least one previous volume from his pen, with the ominous title of *Better Dead*; and for long after the fame of *A Window in Thrums* had been assured, a religious weekly kept publishing reprints of articles by the author which had appeared, without attracting notice, years before. Mr Rudyard Kipling, too, seemed to spring suddenly into fame with the production of *Soldiers Three*, and some Indian poems and articles in the magazines. But it transpired, upon inquiry and better acquaintance, that his art had been perfected during years of residence in the East, by much story-writing in the Anglo-Indian journals. Again, Mr Stanley J. Weyman seemed to leap into sudden renown the other day with the publication of *A Gentleman of France* and *Under the Red Robe*. But the reader who looks at the *English Illustrated Magazine* for December 1883, will find proof that quite ten years before that apparently sudden acquisition of fortune and fame, Mr Weyman was perfecting his art, and shouldering his way to recognition among the common crowd of story-tellers. As for 'Ian Maclaren,' whether or not his pen has long been practised in the art of deliberate story-telling, it has for half a lifetime, as is well known, had constant practice in moving the emotions of men in a kindred and hardly less literary way.

The truth, indeed, appears to be that success in literature, like success in every other profession, comes even to the ablest men only as the result of long and hard work. When an author, like a comet, bursts suddenly upon the public ken, few take the trouble to reckon up the long years that have gone to the preparation of his brilliance. In the case of Sir Walter Scott, for instance, fame seemed to come with the appearance of his first poem and his first romance, and hardly even yet do people take time to reflect on the lifetime of preparation of which these works were the flower. Though the work of collecting *The Border Minstrelsy* is sometimes cited as the labour amid which Scott obtained his materials and his inspiration, few remember the translations, prose and poetry, from the German, which were the first practice of his hand; and the world forgets the editing of *Sir Tristrem*, and the writing of the *Life of Swift*.

Industry and perseverance, 'an infinite capacity for taking pains,' if they are not indeed genius itself, as has paradoxically been said, form at least the indispensable accompaniments to it. Mr Rider Haggard declares that he writes his books simply by keeping at work on them. And the industry of Mr Rudyard Kipling may be measured by the fact that he is said to have written *The Record of Badalia Herodsfoot* seven times over, and then to have made considerable corrections on the proofs. The late Professor

Huxley was another writer whose industry in perfecting his literary expression was only rivalled by his genius.

Strikingly contrasted with this necessity for industry have been the personal inclinations of some conspicuous writers. Thackeray confessed that his besetting sin was laziness: he could never write, he said, till the printer's devil was at his door. The story, again, is told of Dickens, how once in a stationer's shop he was startled by hearing a lady at the counter inquire whether the next number of a certain novel, then appearing in monthly parts, were out yet. Little did the customer guess that the next part of the story was not yet even in existence, and that the gentleman at her elbow, in fact, stood there for the purpose of buying the paper upon which he intended to go home and write the chapter asked for.

Though the publication of stories in monthly parts by themselves appears to have died out since Dickens's time, publication by instalment in weekly and monthly periodicals appears of late to have taken firmer hold than ever. The method is carried out to still greater extent in France, where even the daily journals set great store on their *feuilletons* of fiction. *Le Petit Journal*, a year or two ago, paid M. Richebourg no less a sum than 80,000 francs, about £3750, for the right to publish *La Dame en Noir* in its *feuilleton*, and the publication was said to have increased the daily sales of the paper by thirty thousand.

Similar instances, though perhaps scarcely so conspicuous, might be given of the effects of serial publication in this country, where stories managed in this way have been known to raise the circulation of the periodical in which they appeared by ten and twenty thousand at a time.

The necessities of such a method of publication must sometimes, one should suppose, do no small harm to the construction of a romance. It can hardly help the artistic proportion and evolution of a story when the author is aware that a climax of some kind must be wrought to a point in every chapter. The method, however, has more than one advantage, which, from the writer's point of view, may be held to compensate to some extent for this drawback. It allows an opportunity, during the progress of the story through the press, for an author to learn betimes the popular opinion of his work—an opportunity which several novelists have not been slow to profit by. A well-known recent instance of this was Mr Kipling's treatment of the conclusion of *The Light that Failed*. When the story appeared in a magazine, the popular voice declared against its termination, a happy one, as untrue to probabilities, and a concession to convention. And when the tale appeared later in volume form, the public found that the ending had been changed, and was now, with more truth to probability, of a tragic cast. But an even better instance is recorded of the late Anthony Trollope. While a story of his was running through one of the magazines, the novelist one day happened to dine at a provincial hotel. In the smoking-room after dinner he overheard some young men discussing his story, which was attracting a good

deal of attention. As a whole, they praised it highly; but one point they agreed unanimously to condemn. In the tale there was a certain troublesome old lady who, they said, and they gave their reasons, had become entirely unbearable to the reader, a fact which they were surprised the author had not by this time found out. Trollope, the story goes, listened for a time in silence, but at last he got up, walked over to the amateur critics on the hearthrug, and made them a profound bow. 'Gentlemen,' he said, 'I beg to introduce myself: I am the author of the story you have been good enough to discuss. I have listened to your criticism, and have heard you condemn Mrs —. I am sorry she is disagreeable to you, but she shall be so no longer, for I shall go home and kill her off at once.' And he did it.

To this opportunity of alteration and correction there falls to be added the further advantage that the serial publication of a story frequently proves, to the author, the most profitable. And the pecuniary return is what to some people, authors not excluded, appears the final test of art.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

CHAPTER V.—A BARGAIN.

ROBERT shut the study door carefully as if to exclude any chance of being overheard. The room was dark now save for the gas-lamp on the opposite side of the street. He lit a reading-lamp, which threw a little circle of bright light on the papers of the writing-table, and awakened reflections on the polished walls of cedar, luminous breadths which intensified the shadows between and below. The room felt ghostly. I took a chair outside the circle of light; my cousin took his own chair in his own place within the circle. Then an odd thing happened. Some one in the other room—of course it was Isabel—began to play. She played some soft music, a reverie, a song without words, a romance, a gentle suggestive kind of music; it acted on me as a mesmeric influence; it is a weakness which always falls upon me when I hear soft music played with sympathy—suggestive music. It falls upon my brain, and I seem to see visions and dream dreams. So while Isabel's fingers rambled over the notes, and her music fell soft and sweet upon the soul, it seemed as if I was only sitting again where I used to sit a long time ago, and that I had just been talking of the recent loss of those jewels with my cousin, whom I suspected of the theft. And I remembered the bedside watching and the death of old John Burnikel, and the search after those diamonds, and the deplorable quarrel with my cousin and the fight that followed. I say that I remembered all this as if I myself was present at these events. Then things got mixed. I had stolen these diamonds myself. By these, and as judge, second baronet and third baronet, I succeeded in gaining more wealth and distinction. But—a very important thing—time was up. My cousin's turn was now to come.

'Well,' said the boat-builder, 'I have told

you everything—all my ambitions—quite openly and freely. I have trusted you.'

'You have.'

'I trust a man, or I do not, by his face. That's why I trusted you.'

'All that you have said is in confidence, of course.'

'Isabel doesn't know, except that I mean to go ahead. Well, what you told me before tea is disturbing. All the same I mean to go into the House as an independent member. And I know the borough I shall choose. I shall stand for Shadwell, where they know me. As for the money that the election will cost—well, I can't very well afford it, that's certain, but I must plank it down. It will be an investment.'

'Very good.'

'Then tell me, is there anything I have forgotten? I want to stand at the next general election. I want to begin nursing the borough at once.'

'Perhaps—there may be—one thing,' I replied, with hesitation.

'What thing? I have thought it all out. I can speak. I am not afraid. I can give and take. I know the institutions of the country and their history. I know the questions of the day and the actual facts about them. I've got a memory like a well-ordered cupboard. What have I forgotten?'

'You are not the man I take you for if you are offended.'

'Nonsense, man. You can't offend me.' There are two or three ways of pronouncing the last four words. They may be so emphasised as to convey the highest compliment or the greatest contempt. Robert's way inclined to the latter. He expressed moderate contempt and self-satisfied superiority. A touchy man would have been offended. I am not a touchy man; and I took the reply—compliment or contempt—with a cheerful smile, wasted because unseen in the gloom of the room. I might as well have scowled.

'Well, then, you have forgotten one thing. That is—manners.'

'Manners!' In the bright light I saw his eyes flash and his cheek flame. It was as if the limit of patience had been reached. 'Manners?' he repeated. 'You mean that I don't know how to behave. I'd have you learn, then, that we behave as well at Wapping as Piccadilly.'

Robert snorted with indignation. For a moment I feared that I had mortally offended him. So I hastened to bring along what the Persian poet calls the watering-pot of conciliation.

'One moment. I mean this. You have set before yourself a definite end. Your design is to become a power in the House. You cannot afford, therefore, as you very well understand, to neglect any means of attaining this end. Now, a power in the House must mean in some sense or other a man of society. Not to know the ways and usages of society would be the greatest possible hindrance to you. Tell me, for instance, do you possess that simple article, indispensable for society—the common dress-coat?'

'No, I've got an office-coat and a house-coat

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and a Sunday-coat. What more does a man want?'—

'Nothing more, really. But we are artificial. Have you, next, ever been to an evening dinner-party?'—

'We dine at one o'clock every day—the good old time. There are no evening dinner-parties here.'

'It is the good old time, no doubt. Still we are, as I said, artificial, and society dines in the evening. Now, as to a reception or a ball, or anything of that sort'—

'Oh!' Robert groaned. 'What has this kind of thing got to do with me?'—

'And as to the common language of society, and as to such simple matters as the art and literature and drama of the social world'—

'What has all this got to do with the business?'—

'A great deal. My ambitious cousin, knowledge of all your subjects will not advance you by yourself. Even oratory will not advance you by itself. You must make yourself a *persona grata*; you must become one of the world; you must dress, talk, act, behave in their way, not in yours. Mind, you must.'

My cousin groaned again.

'For instance, part of manners is the art of suppressing yourself. You must learn to show a less serious front.'

'Learn to pretend—that's what your fine manners mean.'

'Learn to assume a side of smiles and light talk—and, perhaps, of lighter epigram. You must be able to laugh at things. Do you know that a man who can laugh has ten times greater chance than a man who is always in earnest? You will cultivate, my cousin, if you are wise, the manners, talk, ways, customs, and usages of society, before, not after, you go into the House. Believe me, if you are to rise, as seems likely, you will have to learn these things somehow, and you had better learn them quietly and at leisure before you go in.'

My cousin banged the table with his fist. 'Good Lord!' he cried. 'First you tell me that I must join a party and make myself a slave, and lie, and wriggle, and cringe, and fetch, and carry, and say, and do what I am told. Do you think I would enter the House on such conditions? Never!'

'As you please.'

'And now you tell me, in addition, that I must learn the niminy-piminy, trumpery pretences that you call manners. Well, I won't. You may have your manners, and I will keep mine.'

'Then you will fail. Understand me, cousin. This is not a question of Piccadilly ways. It is one of taking your place with the members as their equal, from the outset. This is of the greatest importance to you. At present—I speak freely—your manners are only those of a superior working-man. You have lived alone in this corner, and you have forgotten the need of manners. I say that you must learn our manners. You must! You must!'

You will observe that I was at this time greatly struck with the man's ability as well

as his courage. A smaller man one would have suffered to make his way as he could, sink or swim, probably the former, from sheer ignorance of manners. But this man conquered me. I had never before met with any man who knew so much and spoke so well, and at the same time had such an excellent opinion of himself. Conceit and vanity we have with us always; they are given by kindly Providence to make up for incompetence. But that an able man should be so avowedly self-reliant is rare. I thought that the man himself justified my plain-speaking.

He was staggered. 'You can't make me a lardy-dardy fine gentleman,' he objected, weakly.

'There is no such thing nowadays. The young fellows are all athletes. I don't want to make you a man of fashion, or a man about town. Nothing of the sort. I want to make you a well-bred, quiet man, able to hold your own. You are built for the part; you look the part. I want you to put on a glove of velvet to hide your wrist of iron. Do you understand that?'—

The prospect of hiding a wrist of iron pleased the man who desired strength above all things. The use of the velvet, and how this choice fabric lends itself to ambitious purposes, he did not, as yet, understand.

'Well,' he said, unwillingly. 'You may be right. Perhaps there is something in it. But if there is, I am too old to learn. Manners can't be taught. There was no school for manners.'

I got up. 'Before I go, cousin Robert, I have something to tell you. All the confidences shall not be yours.'

'Something to tell me?' Robert looked up, but there was a discouraging want of interest in his eye, and an intimation conveyed by his manner that he was thinking about himself, and was not at all interested in my confidences.

'It is not a very long confidence. Not a tenth part so long as yours.'

'That's good,' said my cousin. 'Cut along.'

'Well, it is only this. You called upon me, you have talked to me, in the belief that I am rich.'

'A quarter of a million of money the judge left behind him.'

'He did. But it is all gone. My father was unfortunate in certain transactions. He lost it all. I only found it out—found out, that is, the whole truth, yesterday—the day you called upon me.'

'What! Lost your fortune? What are you going to do now?'

'That I don't know yet. Perhaps you may be able to help me. On the other hand, I may be able to help you.'

'Have you got nothing?'

'Two or three thousand only.'

'Oh! He calls three thousand nothing. If I had as much. Well, what would you like to do best?'

'Frankly, I don't know. I have learned nothing except the use of a lathe and carpentering tools.'

'You ought to be a boat-builder, by rights.'

'I believe I ought. Well, Robert—I may call you by your Christian name—you shall put me on to something or other. And as for me, I can introduce you, at least, to some pleasant people.'

'I want useful people.'

'They may be useful as well. You shall help me, and I will help you. Is that a bargain?'

Robert hesitated. Every business man looks upon a bargain from all points of view, and especially to see how it will benefit himself. He made up his mind apparently that the bargain was in his favour, for he stretched out his arm. 'Hands upon it, cousin.'

At that moment—it was a happy omen—Isabel's music burst into a glad triumphal march.

So I presently sat down and wrote two letters—the first to my cousin Robert, and the second to Frances.

This was the first—the important, epoch-making letter:

'MY DEAR COUSIN—I have been turning over in my mind the difficulty in which we were stuck during our last conversation. And I have a curious proposal to make to you. It is this: You shall take me into your yard and teach me the trade or craft of boat-building—all about it—making—selling—wages—prices—materials—everything. Perhaps in six months or so I may be master of the subject. You will do this for nothing. I, for my part, after the day's work, will take you home with me—to my chambers. And for five nights out of the week I will arrange something or other that will give you that kind of experience of which we spoke. If this arrangement pleases you, send me a letter in reply.'

That was how it began. We entered upon this exchange without understanding what was to follow—who ever understands what is to follow? If we were to understand what is to follow, nobody would do anything, because whatever follows is sure to contain the drop of bitterness or incompleteness, or the unlooked for evil that goes with everything. We were, in fact, without knowing it, preparing for an exchange. As you shall see, the bargain meant that Robert was to take my place, and I was to take his. But as yet, I say, we suspected nothing of this.

In the morning I presented myself in the guise of a working-man. That is to say, I put on a fishing-costume of tweeds. Perhaps, as a working-man, I ought not to have taken a hansom, but, of course, one is not correct all at once in every detail.

Over that first morning let me lay, piously, a few asterisks.

* * * * *

At half-past twelve we knocked off for dinner. Quite ready I was to knock off. I walked across the street with my cousin and joined in the early dinner, which was served at one. We had, I remember, stalled ox and humming ale, and a ginger pudding.

'Going to learn how to build a boat, are you?' said the captain. 'Ha! You couldn't learn a more useful thing nor a prettier thing. A boat's about the loveliest thing that a man can make. Every kind of boat; a man-o'-war's

launch; or a little up-river cedar and putty skiff; the loveliest thing it is. And what in the world is there more useful? As for you, sir, a Burnikel, even if he is a nobleman, ought to take to boat-building by nature.'

Robert took his dinner, as he had taken his tea, in silence. It was the custom, I perceived. Isabel carved, at which one marvelled. I observed that she carved well. When she was not carving, she sat at the table pale and silent, watching Robert, her task-master, and her ice-cold lover. She took very little dinner—much less than a girl of her age ought to take. She looked as if she had no other interest in life than just to satisfy her master. As for youth and life and cheerfulness, these things did not appear to exist in the house. Yet Robert was only twenty-six, two years older than myself, and Isabel was not yet twenty-two.

Dinner over, the captain returned to his own den at the back, whence presently proceeded the smell of tobacco. I believe that he also solaced himself after dinner with a glass of something warm and a slice of lemon in it. Robert, observing that he always went over the way at two, retired into his study. He was one of those unfortunate men who never waste their time. We all know the kind; they use up every odd ten minutes.

Isabel, as soon as the cloth was cleared, spread out her account books and began to work.

'Is it good,' I said, 'to work directly after dinner?'

'I do not know. Robert always works after dinner.' I observed that she had a very sweet voice, soft and musical.

'Robert is a strong man. You are not a strong man. May I use the privilege of a cousin—you are to be my cousin some time—to point out to you that many things which Robert may do with impunity, you must not even attempt to do.'

'The work has got to be done, and I cannot ask whether this time or that time is best.'

'Why not play a little after dinner? You play very well.'

'I never play during working-hours. Robert would not like it.'

'Then—'

'Please, Sir George, allow me to go on with my work.'

I said no more, but stood at the window and watched her. She had a head of comely shape; and her features were good, but why so sad? Why so pale? Why so silent?

Presently I went back to more aching shoulders and tired wrists, envying the workmen, who never wanted to straighten their backs, and whose wrists seemed made of iron.

The foreman stood over me. 'You're handy with the tools,' he said.

I worked like the rest, without a coat, and with sleeves turned up. But I deny the apron. In the last century every working-man wore an apron, and every serving-man in a shop wore an apron. Now we have left off that badge of trade or servitude. On the whole, I think that I am glad that I never wore an apron. I kept my working-clothes in the house, and changed them in the morning and for dinner, and I declare that as I grew to

understand how a boat was built, how her lines were laid down, how her skeleton was put together, how her ribs were clothed, and how she was finished and fitted, a noble enthusiasm—the family enthusiasm—seized upon me, and I felt that true happiness lay not in ambition, which in Robert's case I regarded with pity; not in wealth, taking my own case as an example; but in the building of boats.

THE LONG ARM OF COINCIDENCE.

A STORY OF CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE.

NOVELISTS and playwrights are often ridiculed for their indebtedness to the 'long arm of coincidence' to pull them out of the difficulties of a tangled plot, and, without doubt, their demands upon this convenient *deus ex machina* are frequently of a kind to provoke our incredulity. At the same time it is hard to place any limit to the possibilities of coincidence, and most persons, who have had much experience of life, must be able to recall some strange coincidences which were altogether outside the pale of probability. The story we purpose telling here affords a singular instance of unexpected incidents happening at the very moment when a man's life was quivering in the balance, and supplying evidence to save him from the gallows.

On the night of Monday, June 10, 1861, a mysterious and brutal murder was perpetrated at Kingswood Rectory, about four miles from Reigate, in the county of Surrey. The rector, with his wife and family, was on a visit at Dorking, and the house had been left in the sole charge of Martha Halliday, wife of the parish clerk. She was absolutely alone, for the servants had accompanied their master and mistress, and her husband had to look after his own house, as there was no one to take his wife's place there. But Martha being a woman of courage and nerve, had no objection to sleeping alone at the rectory, as she had frequently done before.

She was last seen alive by her husband, who parted from her between six and seven o'clock in the evening. When he went up to the rectory the next morning to see his wife, he found the back-door locked, but on going round to the front-door, to his surprise found it ajar. He entered and called to his wife, but receiving no answer, went in search of her. She was nowhere down-stairs, but, on entering her bedroom, to his horror he saw her lying dead on the floor in her night-dress. That she had been brutally murdered was evident at a glance, for her hands and feet were bound with hempen cord, a handkerchief was tied over her face, and a stocking had been thrust tightly into her mouth.

Halliday promptly gave the alarm, the parish constable arrived, and a minute search of the premises was made. But they had not to go far for a clue to the murderer. Under the bed, a few inches from the spot where the murdered woman lay, there was picked up a packet of papers tied round with string. The papers, six in number, were all in German. One was what is called in Germany a service-book—the credentials furnished by the authorities to craftsmen and others—and was made out

in the name of Johann Carl Franz of Schandau, in Upper Saxony, a minute description of whose person it contained, similar to that in a passport. There were also two certificates, one of birth and one of baptism, both bearing the name of Johann Carl Franz.

The other three papers had apparently no connection with Franz. One was a letter without address, soliciting relief from some lady of quality, signed 'Adolphe Kröhn.' Another, dated 7th June (three days before the murder), was in the handwriting of Madame Tietjens, addressed to Mr Kroll of the Hamburg Hotel, America Square, requesting him to send the bearer, a destitute fellow-countryman, back to Germany at her expense. The third was a slip of paper with a number of addresses jotted down upon it, among them that of Madame Goldschmidt (Jenny Lind).

Besides the papers, there was found in the room a roughly shaped bludgeon of beechwood, not long cut from the tree. This, however, had not been used, for the woman's body bore no marks of blows, and it was evident that death had been caused by suffocation, for the stocking had been rammed into her mouth with such force that the tongue was forced back over the glottis or narrow opening at the upper part of the windpipe. The footprints on the flower-beds under the windows were of different sizes, and showed that two persons at least had been concerned in the crime. The motive was doubtless robbery, but the men were probably frightened when they found that they had killed the woman, whose resistance necessitated violence, or else they were alarmed by some sound outside, for they decamped without taking anything from the house.

With such an important clue as the packet of papers to start with, the task set the police seemed an easy one. It was soon discovered that two foreigners, one short and dark, the other tall and fair, had been seen in the neighbourhood of Kingswood on the day before the murder (Sunday, 9th June). They had applied for lodgings at the Cricketers' Inn, Reigate, and had slept there on the Sunday night, remaining in the house till four o'clock on the Monday afternoon, when they left. During their stay they had only quitted the inn twice to make some purchases, and on each occasion had only been absent a few minutes. The potman was certain that he should recognise them both again, because, hearing them talk in an outlandish tongue, he had taken particular notice of them.

Then a labourer remembered having seen two foreigners in a beech wood not far from Kingswood, about seven o'clock in the evening of the day of the murder. He passed within a dozen yards of them and knew they were foreigners, because they were speaking in a language which he did not understand. This was an important piece of evidence, for, on examining the wood, it was found that a branch had been newly torn from one of the trees, which exactly corresponded with the bludgeon found in the room.

But the most startling evidence was that supplied by the wife of a brush-maker at Reigate, who remembered that on the day of

the murder, two foreigners came into her shop and bought a ball of string of a peculiar make, very seldom manufactured, known as 'rublay-cord.' One of them could speak broken English, but when they conversed together it was in a foreign language. She showed them several different kinds of string before they selected this particular one, which was precisely identical with that found round the murdered woman's hands and feet.

The only other fact of importance was that two men, apparently foreigners, had been stopped by a policeman at Sutton, some eight or ten miles from Kingswood, about two o'clock on Tuesday morning, that is to say, presumably two or three hours after the murder was committed, and in reply to the constable's question, 'Where are you going?' one of them said, in a strong foreign accent, 'To Old Pye Street, Westminster.'

So far the scent was hot, and it seemed as if the quarry must be speedily run to earth. But the trail was lost at Sutton, and every effort to pick it up again failed. No one could be found who had seen anything of the two foreigners after the policeman accosted them at two o'clock on the Tuesday morning. The Government offered a reward of one hundred pounds; Mr Alcock of Kingswood Warren, M.P. for the division, added another hundred pounds; but no further clue was forthcoming, and the murder of Martha Halliday seemed destined to be classed among the unsolved mysteries of crime, when an accident put the police upon the track of the murderer.

On the 2d of July, more than three weeks after the murder, a German was taken into custody in the East end of London on a trumpety charge of assault. The inspector on duty was about to let the man go, when it suddenly flashed upon him that the fellow bore a resemblance to the description circulated of Johann Carl Franz, and he ordered him to be detained until the Reigate police could be communicated with. The Reigate inspector came up to town, saw the suspected German, and, after close examination, decided that he was sufficiently like the description of Johann Carl Franz, given in the service-book already mentioned, to justify his arrest. Accordingly, the man was brought up before the Reigate magistrates for examination. He gave his name as Salzmann, denied that he was Johann Carl Franz, of whom he declared he knew nothing, and was remanded for further inquiries. At his second examination he caused a profound sensation by voluntarily confessing that he *was* Johann Carl Franz, the owner of the papers which bore his name. But at the same time he stoutly denied all complicity in the crime, declared that he had never been in or near Reigate or Kingswood in his life, and told the following story to account for the discovery of his papers by the side of the murdered woman.

He had landed, he said, from Germany at Hull, and had made his way through Leeds, Oldham, and Manchester to Liverpool, where he hoped to get a passage to America. But, failing in his object, he resolved to tramp to London in search of work. On his way thither he fell in with two fellow-countrymen,

both sailors, the one named Adolphe Kröhn, the other Wilhelm Gerstenberg.

The latter had no papers, and being of about the same stature and complexion as Franz, was perpetually asking him for the loan of his papers, as the description, he said, would suit both of them. But Franz refused to grant his request. One evening in May they all three lay down to sleep behind a stack of straw in an open field. Franz was so tired that he slept soundly. When he awoke, his companions were gone, and they had taken with them his papers and his bag, which contained a suit of clothes of the same stuff and pattern as he was then wearing. Among the papers stolen from him was one which was missing from the packet found in Kingswood Rectory: it was a railway guard's testimonial or certificate. From the moment he awoke and discovered that his companions had deserted and robbed him, he had never set eyes on either of them. He had eventually reached London, where he wandered the streets in a state of destitution till he met a fellow-countryman whom he accosted and asked for assistance. The man took him into an eating-house, and whilst he was having his meal, read to him from a newspaper the account of a murder, the perpetrator of which was supposed to be a German named Johann Carl Franz. He was dreadfully alarmed on hearing this, and resolved to assume another name; for that reason he had called himself Salzmann.

So far the story was plausible, and as Franz declared that his clothes had been stolen as well as his papers, and that those clothes consisted of a suit exactly like the one he was wearing, it was within the bounds of possibility that the witnesses, who swore that they had seen him at Reigate on the day of the murder, might have mistaken his double, Gerstenberg, for him.

But there was something else which the prisoner had to explain. When his lodgings in Whitechapel were searched, there was found a woollen shirt which he admitted to be his—this shirt was tied up in a bundle with a piece of string, and this string was 'rublay-cord' of precisely the same manufacture as that which had been sold to the two foreigners at Reigate on the day of the murder. The prisoner's explanation was that he had picked up the bit of string casually in a street close to his lodgings—it was lying on the pavement outside a tobacconist's shop. He remembered this, because it was on coming out of the shop, after buying half an ounce of tobacco, that he saw the string and picked it up.

Here was the weak place in his story. For the manufacturer of the string was called and swore that it was of the same uncommon kind as that with which the hands and feet of the murdered woman were bound—that it was his own special manufacture, unlike that made by any other manufacturer—that the woman who had sold the ball of string to the two foreigners was an old customer of his, and that he had recently sent her a consignment of that particular kind of 'rublay-cord.' It was extremely unlikely that a piece of that peculiar string, his own special make, should be picked up casually in the streets of London where very little of it was used.

The prisoner was also asked to say where he was at the time the murder was committed. He could not tell, but he supposed he must have been tramping on the road to London. He was not, however, able to prove an alibi, and there was no evidence but his own assertion that he had not been in the neighbourhood of Reigate at the time when several witnesses swore to having seen him there.

The magistrates had no hesitation in committing the prisoner for trial, and there was little, if any, doubt in the minds of those who had heard or read the evidence that Johann Carl Franz was the murderer of Martha Halliday.

The case came on for trial at the Croydon Assizes on the 6th of August 1861. Mr Justice Blackburn was the judge: Serjeant Ballantine conducted the prosecution, and the Honourable George Denman, Q.C. (afterwards Justice of the Common Pleas) was specially retained by the Saxon Embassy to defend the prisoner.

There were some discrepancies in the evidence adduced for the prosecution, of which the prisoner's counsel made the most in cross-examination. For example, the potman at the Cricketers' Inn, Reigate, swore that the two foreigners who stayed there on the Sunday and part of the Monday, did not leave the inn, except for a few minutes, from the time they came till the time they left, and one of those foreigners he identified on oath as the prisoner at the bar. But another witness, a labourer, swore positively that the prisoner was one of two foreigners whom he met and spoke to at four o'clock on the Sunday afternoon four miles from Reigate. Clearly, then, the foreigners seen by the labourer could not have been the two who stayed at the Cricketers', and if the potman were correct in his identification of Franz as one of the latter, the labourer must be mistaken, and *vice versa*.

Then the woman who sold the string would not swear positively to Franz as one of the men who came to her shop, though the servant, who only saw them through the glass door, identified Franz as the taller and fairer of the two foreigners without any hesitation.

Despite the severe cross-examination of all these witnesses and the discrepancies disclosed thereby, the case looked very black against the prisoner until his attorney was put in the box, and then the whole aspect of the trial was suddenly and sensationally changed.

Now this attorney, before acting as Franz's legal representative, had appeared as interpreter before the magistrates, and he was called by the prosecution to verify the prisoner's answers to the questions put to him, and his own explanations of the proceedings to Franz, whose knowledge of English was very imperfect.

In the course of his examination-in-chief, the attorney was questioned as to his knowledge of Franz's handwriting, and a manuscript-book was suddenly put into his hands by Serjeant Ballantine, who asked abruptly, 'Is this the prisoner's handwriting?'

The witness, not knowing what was being sprung upon him, but recognising at once that the handwriting *was* that of Franz, answered hastily, 'Yes—but I never saw this before.'

Counsel for the defence asked to be allowed to look at the book and found that it was a diary kept by the prisoner. Each day's events were carefully recorded, with the names of the towns at which he had stopped, until he reached Leek in Staffordshire—at that point the entries abruptly ceased.

Mr Denman expressed his surprise that notice of the existence of this diary had not been given to the attorney for the defence, and then the following remarkable facts were brought to light. The diary had only come into the hands of the prosecution on the preceding evening. It had been picked up by two tramps on a heap of straw in a deserted hovel in Northamptonshire, on the 9th of July, *the day after* the prisoner had told his story to the magistrates. These men arrived in London a few days before the trial, and hearing some persons talking about the murder in a public-house, they caught the name Johann Carl Franz frequently repeated. On searching through a newspaper they saw the name printed, and recognised it as identical with that attached to a paper which they had found inside the diary. They showed both documents to the landlord, who advised them to communicate with the prisoner's attorney, who would probably reward them for their 'find.' But by mistake they went to the attorneys for the prosecution. Mr Denman asked to see the paper which had been found by the tramps inside the diary. Apparently it had been thought of no account by the prosecution—at any rate, Serjeant Ballantine was not aware of its nature, and the surprise of the court may be imagined when it proved to be the railway guard's testimonial or certificate which Franz declared to have been one of the papers that had been stolen from him. This was a most singular corroboration of one portion of the prisoner's story, but there was a more startling coincidence yet to come.

In cross-examination by counsel for the defence, the prisoner's attorney said he had taken great pains to try and verify the statements made by his client, and with regard to one piece of evidence, which was held to tell strongly against the prisoner, he had made a remarkable discovery. Franz's explanation of his possession of that damning bit of 'rublay-cord,' was that he had picked it up on the pavement outside a tobacconist's shop in a street not far from that in which he lodged. The attorney, while trying to obtain evidence for an alibi in the locality in which Franz had lived, turned into a tobacconist's shop for a cigar, and the first thing which met his eye on the counter, was a ball of this very 'rublay-cord!' On inquiry he found that the tobacconist was in the habit of using this particular kind of string. Now this tobacconist's shop was but two minutes' walk from the street in which Franz had lodged, and on further investigation, it was discovered that the premises of the string-maker who manufactured this peculiar 'rublay-cord,' were closely adjoining the tobacconist's shop. It was therefore quite possible, nay, even probable, that the prisoner's story of the way in which he became possessed of that damning piece of string was true.

No witnesses were called for the defence;

Mr Denman had thus the advantage of addressing the jury without a reply from the prosecution, and the value of the last word in such cases is often inestimable. In a powerful and impressive speech, which lasted four hours, he pressed home the force of these striking coincidences in corroboration of the prisoner's story with great vigour and point. The judge, too, one of the ablest, most clear-headed and logical reasoners on the bench, laid considerable stress upon them in his summing-up, and the end of it was that, after a long deliberation, the jury gave the prisoner the benefit of the doubt and acquitted him, though it transpired afterwards that at first ten of them were in favour of a verdict of 'Guilty.'

It was a case that fairly bristled with coincidences on both sides, but those in support of the prisoner's innocence were the more strange, and the more striking. If the tramps had not discovered the diary and the railway guard's certificate when they did, and had not been prompted to show it to the landlord of the inn—if the attorney had not accidentally gone into that tobacconist's shop and seen the ball of 'rublay-cord' lying on the counter—there would have been no independent evidence to corroborate the prisoner's story, and Johann Carl Franz would undoubtedly have been found guilty and hanged. He owed his life, therefore, to

A 'strange coincidence,' to use a phrase
By which such things are settled nowadays.

Disheartened by the acquittal of Franz, the police made no further attempt to solve the mystery of Martha Halliday's murder. Yet there was more than one problem connected with the case, which the public would have liked to see worked out to a solution. Were there two distinct pairs of foreigners in the neighbourhood of Kingswood on that eventful 9th and 10th of June? The evidence certainly seemed to indicate that there were, and this in itself was a curious coincidence. While, strangest of all was the fact that neither of these two pairs of foreigners could be traced beyond Reigate and Kingswood, unless indeed the policeman at Sutton were correct in assuming that the persons he stopped were foreigners—a point on which some doubt was thrown. If they had been spirited away by supernatural agency they could not have vanished more completely or left less trace behind them.

THE GIRDLETON GALLERY MYSTERY.

CHAPTER III.

EVEN as the turning of defeat into victory is the consummation of tactics, so is the conversion of loss into profit the apotheosis of business. Mr Girdleton had always professed a large contempt for the skill of the detective department, and the continued failure of the men entrusted with the task of finding the destroyer of his picture, to make any progress worth reporting, seemed to afford him a certain melancholy gratification which became apparent in his manner towards his subordinates. For a few days after that eventful Sunday, his clerks had approached him with inquiries for news in fear and trembling; but now the

clouds had cleared away, and though Mr Girdleton's manner was a little subdued, it was recognised in the outer office that the 'governor,' like a true philosopher, had made up his mind to look upon the redeeming features of his misfortune. The 'takings,' although they often rose to a hundred pounds and over in a day, held out no promise of full compensation for the original sum paid for the Raphael; but when the London public was exhausted the picture was to go on tour: to Birmingham, Manchester, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and other great towns where a rich crop of shillings might with confidence be looked for.

The newspapers were doing their duty nobly. The *Collegian*, it is true, had at first contented itself with expressing in four lines its regret at learning 'that the apocryphal Raphael acquired at so absurd a price by the proprietor of the Girdleton Gallery,' had been injured by some person unknown. But its younger rival, the *University*, attacked it so fiercely for its 'ungenerous attitude,' that the *Collegian* 'felt bound even at the risk of wearying our readers to justify again the position we have taken up from the outset,' and forthwith launched forth a series of editorials so closely critical, so caustic, and withal so aggressive, that every literary and artistic weekly of any pretensions at all, attacked 'our usually fair-minded contemporary' with a degree of energy that left no doubt in the public mind that the 'Girdleton Gallery Outrage' was a National affair. All the illustrated weeklies subscribed to the illusion by publishing full-page pictures of the Raphael as it was, and as it appeared now; and Mr Girdleton's banking account swelled in precise ratio with public feeling as thus stimulated.

Some five weeks had passed since the day of the outrage; the continued non-success of the detectives began to excite sarcastic comment in the evening papers and to vex the patient soul of Mr Girdleton.

'They can't find the scamp himself,' he said; 'I'll try for the stolen fragment.'

Accordingly he paid another visit to Lincoln's Inn Fields, which was followed a day or two later by the appearance of another advertisement setting forth that inasmuch as the former reward had not been claimed, Messrs Lee Boughton & Phipps were now instructed to pay the said sum of five thousand pounds to any person who should place in their hands, intact, and in sound condition, the missing portion of the picture by Raphael Sanzio whereon was portrayed, &c., &c. Further, it was delicately hinted that Mr Girdleton did not intend to institute criminal proceedings. This new advertisement had its effect upon the takings, which latterly had shown symptoms of falling off; and upon the newspapers whose enthusiasm was beginning to flag. The *Diurnal Intelligence* and *Eastminster Gazette*, for example, vied with each other in hysterical applause of the public spirit and forgiving disposition of that eminent patron of the fine arts, Mr Andrew Girdleton. It is one of the redeeming features of high civilisation that you may receive credit for all the virtues of a citizen and a Christian by caring for your own interests.

Richard Eltham, to whom these weeks had been a period of unbroken anxiety, was moved to despair by the new advertisement. He had long since rectified his first omission by promising Welks five pounds on the day which should see him introduced to that 'young boy'; and Welks, according to his own account, had been indefatigable in tramping the streets; but his eyes so far had not been gladdened by a glimpse of the owner of the red hair and clean collar. He avowed his belief that the boy had been 'sperrited away.'

'I'm afraid we may as well give it up, Welks,' said Eltham on the evening of the day when the amended offer of reward appeared. 'This will draw the thief himself to a certainty. He can't sell the piece, and it must have been stolen in hopes of reward for returning it.'

Welks growled; if he had taken his information to the police, he would have done better. He had lost 'a sight of time and shoe leather' hunting for that boy.

'I'll give you a sovereign, anyhow,' said Eltham with an effort, for he could ill afford the periodical refreshers he had already disbursed. 'Have the detectives been at you again?'

'A dozen times, sir,' replied the man, mollified, 'but I can't tell them nothink, I can't,' and he chuckled.

At first Eltham had been fearful lest his ally should be bought over, but Welks had discovered a vein of staunchness that surprised and delighted him. That there should be an element of self-interest in his loyalty was to be expected, and Welks never made any attempt to disguise it.

'You'll deal fair and honest,' he repeated again this evening. 'I trusts you to deal fair; but it ain't much I'd get out of the police once they'd got all out of me. They're too friendly like, these 'ere 'specially 'trusted. "Ave a drink, Welks," they says, and I 'as a drink. "Ave another drop—it won't 'urt you;" and I 'as and it don't, and then a drop more, and then it's "Come, now, out with it, 'ere's arf a crown; I'm 'specially 'trusted with this 'ere job; give me a hand, and I'll remember you if you tells wot you know.'" Mr Welks shook his head knowingly at the shallow wiles of the detectives. 'But I never knows nothink; they're all 'specially 'trusted, bless their 'arts, but I can't tell anythink.'

'Then nobody knows about the boy's visit yet?'

'No, Mr Eltham; nor won't.'

'Well, I wish we'd had half the luck your discreet silence deserves, Welks. Here's the sov. for you. I'm afraid it's no good your looking for the boy any more now, though.'

'I'll take a turn round to-morrow again, sir; it won't do any harm.'

'It will do no harm,' said Eltham carelessly, for he could not see that it could be of any use. The thief would return the stolen fragment within the next day or two, as surely as the sun would rise; and Eltham went home feeling that his chief object in life had been swept away.

But the days passed and no word came from the mutilator. The clerks grew mystified to

the verge of insanity; Eltham cheered up a little, rejoicing that he had not damped out Welks' ardour; and Mr Girdleton relapsed into gloomy silence again.

'It proves that the motive was spiteful and not mercenary,' he said, 'and that being so, there is little hope of recovering the piece.'

It was in the afternoon, about ten days after the new advertisement appeared, that Peters stepped into the office and informed Eltham that their late night-watchman begged leave to speak to him. Eltham hurriedly changed his coat and went out, to find Welks waiting for him on the other side of the street.

'I thought I'd come and tell you as I'd found the boy, sir; comed on him by accident like. But mayhap it's no good now?'

'Really, Welks, I'm not at all sure that it isn't. The reward has not been claimed, and we may just as well go on. Come back here this evening at seven o'clock sharp, and show me where the boy lives. You ascertained that, I suppose?'

Welks had followed the boy home; and Eltham returned to his work treading on air. Never in his life had summer afternoon been so interminable; the clocks seemed to have conspired against him. His wits went wool-gathering; he made mistakes in counting his cash, blundered in posting his books, and had to be called back to lock the safe; but at last he was free to go.

Mindful of Welks' vindictive feelings against the guileless instrument of the rascally schemer who had decoyed him from his post, Eltham was careful to impress upon him the necessity for gaining the boy's confidence. How they should proceed must depend upon circumstances. Welks agreed to everything he said, and led the way through back streets, which he seemed to prefer to a more direct route, till they arrived at a mews half-blocked with carriages in process of washing and horses being rubbed down. Children were playing wherever there was a little unoccupied space, and presently Welks caught Eltham by the arm and stopping dead, pointed, like a well-broken setter, to a group engaged in a noisy game of marbles.

'Wait a bit,' said Eltham, who felt himself growing pale with excitement: 'let's look on for a minute; I want to hear the boy's name.'

A boy whose red hair singled him out knelt to play, and a good shot was received with acclamation.

'I say, Charley,' said Welks, duly prompted, as the successful player stood aside, 'you didn't wait for that 'ere penny t'other Sunday.'

The boy looked startled, but recognising Welks, replied shyly that he left because he 'was afraid mother would lick him if he was late for his dinner.'

'Well, look 'ere,' said Welks, ostentatiously thrusting his hand into his pocket, a motion which exercised a magnetic attraction upon Charley.

'Who came to the gallery while you were there?' asked Eltham.

'In the gall'ry? w'y, nobody.'

'Then who gave you the letter you brought to Mr Welks?'

'He—the footman.'

Further questions elicited the information that the footman belonged to the house to which Charley's father took his carriage. He would show the house if they liked; and, told they would like, he marched off before them up the mews, and along Hanover Street, drawing his hand against the railings as he went. This was the house; he was standing whistling to the cook's canary in the window, when the footman came up the steps and gave him a penny to take the note round to the gallery.

'Wot next?' inquired Welks, when the boy, duly feed'd, had run back to his game in the mews.

Eltham glanced at his watch; it was a quarter to eight, dinner-time, when the servants would be busiest. Nothing could be done for an hour or so at least, and what then, he had not quite resolved.

'You can go now, Welks; I'll see the business through, and will write to you to-morrow if I see this footman to-night. We are not going to catch the thief and pull the bit of the picture out of his coat-tail pocket this evening, you know,' he added, as the man hesitated. 'All I can do is find out from the footman who gave him the note for you.'

This did not seem to fully satisfy Welks; but after lingering a few moments, he muttered something and went off; Eltham, glad to be alone that he might consider his next move, glanced at the number of the house and strolled up the street. The address, 65 Hanover Street, seemed familiar to him, but in what connection he knew it he could not call to mind. The fact of the note having come from that house, and the idea that he ought to know who lived there, clung together, and he began to imagine that there might be a link, possibly an important one, between the two. He quickened his pace, and set off in search of a public-house whose window should offer that chaste excuse for refreshment in the shape of 'Post-office Directory Here.' He found one, and having gone through the necessary formality, at the cost of twopence, obtained the book he wanted. 65, Markham, Henry. Ah! for the second time that evening he felt his heart beating like a hammer. He knew the Markhams by name as friends of the Girdletons, and now remembered that he had been told they lived in Hanover Street. So the fateful note had come from their house. He pushed the directory aside, and left the place in a state of baffled wonderment that almost deprived him of power to think. What did it mean? What could it mean?

He had forgotten it was dinner-time for himself as well as for other people, as he returned to Hanover Street and began to pace up and down, keeping ever a watchful eye on the area gate of No. 65. The long June twilight was softening; a newsboy passed bawling 'extry spayshul,' and Eltham followed him, hoping that by chance the footman might be tempted out to buy; the boy sent a yell of exceptional volume, as it seemed, down that area, but it brought him no custom, and Eltham turned back. A policeman strolled by, and observing a respectable loiterer, remarked

facetiously that ladies never *was* punctual. It was growing dusk now, and the lamplighter zigzagged his way up the street. Servants on their 'evening out' began to appear, and every clang of area gate made Eltham turn; but nobody emerged from that he watched.

It was nearly ten o'clock when his dogged patience was rewarded. Passing for the fiftieth time, he saw by the light of the street lamp the figure of a man at the area gate of No. 65. Was it? He crossed over and faced an overgrown boy in buttons who had obviously been sent out to post the letter he had in his hand. Eltham pulled himself together and accosted the youth.

'Are you Mr Markham's footman?'

The tall page stared as if in doubt for a moment and said, 'Yes.'

'Would you mind answering a question or two?'

The tall page did not know; he had to go to the post.

Eltham promptly said he would go with him, and made a timely demonstration of selecting a coin from a handful of small change.

'Do you remember one Sunday about six weeks ago, giving the coachman's little boy a penny to take a note round to Bond Street?'

The page did not think he recollected; he carried such a many notes. But his memory having been judiciously aided by mention of the hour and repetition of Charley's account of the circumstances, he recalled the incident.

Who gave him the note? Was it the mistress now? The mistress? The page inquired of himself in a dull, heavy way. Or the young mistress? He could not say who gave him the note; but he remembered that he told the parlour-maid he was going out, and she said she could not let him, because lunch was just going in and there was company, and she didn't care if he had been told to take a note to Bond Street or not—— He remembered that it was the young mistress, because of something the parlour-maid said.

Eltham felt that he was getting no further forward. He thought for a minute and asked the page who 'the company' consisted of at lunch that day. The youth repeated 'The company, sir?' vaguely, and Eltham crushed down his growing impatience and replied, 'Yes; who were they? ladies or?'

'It was Miss Girdleton, sir, I remember, because when I'd enounced her, the young mistress calls me back and says, "Take this note," and Miss Girdleton says, "It's late; could he go now?"'

Eltham started visibly at mention of Miss Girdleton's name, but mastering himself with an effort, he asked the servant if he recollected whether the lady stayed long after lunch. The page, however, seemed to be growing uneasy or suspicious at so many inquiries, and replied, with more decision than he had yet shown, that he did not know. Recognising that there was nothing more to be extracted from him, Eltham gave him a shilling, said good-night, and turned towards Regent Street, where he would find an omnibus to take him homewards. His investigations had certainly led

him in a most unlooked-for direction, and he was more utterly mystified than ever. The idea that Annie Girdleton was in any way mixed up with the picture-cutting affair was absurd, but she might be able to give him valuable assistance in unravelling it. In the peculiar circumstances he must set aside his promise not to correspond and write to her; all he need do was to ask her if she remembered lunching with the Markhams on that Sunday, and how it came that she was the sender of that note; half a sheet of note-paper would suffice, and her answer received, he could go on again. How lucky it was, what a really wonderful stroke of good fortune, that that page was such an idiot! A youth of ordinary intelligence must have connected the note with the outrage when he read of it in the newspapers, and could thus have put into the hands of the detectives a key that would unlock the whole mystery. His dullness had demanded patience, but Eltham felt quite affectionate towards the slow-witted fellow now.

He wrote to Miss Girdleton that same evening; he told her how he had been induced to pursue his quest; touched upon the precious possibilities which lay behind success, and begged her to tell him how she came to despatch that note. Half a sheet of note-paper and three whole sheets sufficed for the communication.

As he had anticipated, when he went up to Bond Street next morning, Welks was waiting about for him, eager to hear the result of last night's inquiries. Eltham told him he had discovered the person who sent the note, but the sender was at present staying in the country; he had written, and as soon as a reply was received they would go on with their task; they must be content to suspend operations for a few days; the delay would do no harm now they were fairly on the scent. Welks was quite satisfied to leave the mode of procedure to his colleague and said so; but Mr Eltham had forgotten to say who it was had given the letter to the boy. Now Eltham had expected this very natural question, but, unwilling to bring Miss Girdleton's adored name into the matter at all, did not care to answer it. He hesitated, and Welks repeated his query respectfully but firmly.

'I ought to tell you,' said Eltham hesitatingly, 'but for purely personal reasons I don't want to mention the name: it—it was a friend of mine.'

To a mind of the order of Welks' this hesitation could mean only that Eltham was shuffling or worse.

'You don't want to say?' he echoed, fixing the young man with the eye of distrust, 'and w'y? I've trusted you; told you and only you everything I could tell. Now you're agoin' back on me when the work's done.'

In vain Eltham vowed he was not; that the name of the sender was quite immaterial; that in a couple of days at most he would tell everything. Welks grew more sullen and less respectful; he pressed the question, and its very reasonableness baffled Eltham.

'I didn't ought to have left you alone, last night,' growled the man meaningly.

'Do you imagine I would try and swindle you out of your share of the reward if we got it?' asked Eltham. 'Why, man, I could have done nothing without your information.'

Welks 'did not 'magine nothink' but Mr Eltham was playing a game for two, and maybe others would pay for the information he had found so useful; he would see, anyhow. And with this final shaft he slouched off.

ROTHENBURG AND ITS GIANT WINE-CUP.

On the western confines of Bavaria, and less than a couple of miles from the border-line between that province and Württemberg, the little town of Rothenburg has hitherto remained secure from the ravages of the ubiquitous tripper. Although situated almost in the centre of a district literally overrun with English and American tourists, this charming fragment of the Middle Ages is not only comparatively unknown to all but antiquaries and artists, but has actually resisted the ruthless hand of modern civilisation with such complete success, that many people consider it superior to Nuremberg as a specimen of a mediæval town. Natural advantages have, doubtless, contributed largely to this result. The fact that it occupies the summit of a hill, the base of which is washed on three sides by a small stream, renders addition to the town difficult in the extreme. It is situated in the midst of hilly country, it follows no special industry, and it does not lie on a high-road between towns of importance; these circumstances may account for the unaffected mediævalism which is the characteristic of the place. Imagine a town of eight thousand inhabitants falling asleep in the middle of the seventeenth century, and waking in this—the latter end of the nineteenth—to find itself completely untouched, by the modernising influence of advanced civilisation. Such a town is Rothenburg, and, fortunately, another of its features affords a prospect of its remaining in this picturesque but unique condition, and that is, the breadth of the streets, which are so wide as to give no excuse to the German equivalent for a county council to endeavour to widen them. The mediæval character of the town is enhanced, too, by the excellent preservation of the ancient fortifications, the walls being practically intact.

But of all the attractive features of this charming spot, the annual Festspiel, celebrating the capture of the town by Tilly during the Thirty Years' War, ranks first. At that time, and indeed until 1803, Rothenburg was a free city, taking an active part in the Peasants' War of 1525, and in the Thirty Years' War of the following century. It was in the course of the latter, in 1631, that the celebrated Tilly appeared before Rothenburg, and demanded its capitulation. This the citizens refused, with the result that the gallant little town was besieged and taken. Tilly and his generals proceeded to the Rathhaus, and demanded the

municipal keys of the burgomaster. At the same time he imposed a fine of thirty thousand thalers, and garrisoned the town with his soldiers. The burgomaster pleaded in vain for some mitigation of the penalty, until the victorious general, after remaining for some time unmoved by his entreaties, conceived the extraordinary notion of offering to restore the freedom of the town, on condition that one of the inhabitants should come forward and empty at one draught an immense beaker of wine, containing about three and a half litres (over three quarts). This was an unheard-of feat, even in those hard-drinking days, and for some time his offer remained unaccepted. The opportunity of freeing the town from a foreign yoke seemed, however, too important to be lost, and accordingly, a patriotic citizen named Nusch resolved to attempt the difficult task imposed by the conqueror. As a matter of fact, he drained the beaker at one draught, and though tradition relates that a severe illness followed the feat, still he saved the town, for Tilly kept his word, and restored the independence of Rothenburg.

It is this interesting scrap of history which is celebrated every year at Rothenburg. The Kaisersaal of the Rathhaus, the actual scene of the occurrence, is fitted with a stage, on which the representation, consisting of two acts, is performed. Scenery, of course, is unnecessary, the hall having undergone no alteration since the incident which gave rise to the festival, two hundred and fifty years ago, was enacted.

The play begins with an announcement by the burgomaster that Tilly has laid siege to the town. He is soon joined by the chief citizens, and together they decide upon the course of action they shall adopt. The master of arms enters at this moment with a chosen band, and assures the burgomaster of the loyalty of his followers, and of their determination to preserve the town from destruction. Soon after their departure, the firing of cannon is heard at irregular intervals.

The opening of the second act finds the chief citizens seated together in the council chamber, from time to time receiving news of the battle, brought by special messengers from various parts of the fortifications. The firing, which has hitherto been irregular, now becomes loud and frequent, when suddenly a messenger enters, his head bandaged, and bleeding from a severe wound. He brings the dreaded news that the Powder Tower has been blown up, that Tilly has effected an entrance, and is advancing with his officers on the Rathhaus. A few moments of suspense follow, when the conqueror, preceded by heralds, and followed by his officers and a company of armed men, enters the Kaisersaal, and occupies the seat vacated by the burgomaster. Having announced the punishment he proposes inflicting on the town, he is approached by some chosen citizens with a view to obtaining mercy. Tilly, however, remains inexorable, and the deputation is just retreating, when the cellarer comes forward, and offers the victor and his generals the best wine the town can produce. After some hesitation the offer is accepted, and soon

afterwards, an immense glass, containing over three imperial quarts of wine, is brought in. Having tasted the wine and pronounced it excellent, Tilly drinks once more with his generals, when it occurs to him to ascertain the capacity of the vessel. The cellarer informs him that no man has ever drained its contents at one draught, and then it is that Tilly, ordering it to be filled once more, offers to restore the independence of Rothenburg if one of its citizens will perform the feat. Consternation fills the whole assembly, when the heroic Nusch comes forward, and after a short prayer, begins the task which was to free his native city. This is the 'Meistertrunk,' the incident giving its name to the Festspiel, and it is here that the interest in the play reaches its climax. Deep silence fills the hall as Nusch gradually drains the huge glass, when Tilly, rising from his seat amid great excitement, realises with some dismay that the feat is accomplished, and demands the name of the hero. He then declares himself satisfied that the conditions have been fulfilled, and after receiving the thanks of the citizens, and a bouquet at the hands of the cellarer's daughter, retires with his officers from the Rathhaus.

Such is the outline of the Festspiel, in which about a hundred persons—all natives of the little town itself—take part. The acting is excellent, and it is frequently difficult to realise that the performers are quite innocent of dramatic training. The costumes are accurate copies of those of the period in which the incident took place, and contribute largely to the charm of the scene. Tilly himself is a capital representation, both as regards acting and costume, while the burgomaster scarcely falls short of him in either respect.

In the afternoon—for this quaint performance takes place in the morning—the victorious Tilly and his followers march in a procession through the town, finally encamping in a part of the ancient moat. Upwards of three hundred people, many of whom are on horseback, take part in the procession, and it adds very considerably to the interest of the day. Several Hungarians were numbered among Tilly's actual forces, and these are faithfully represented, together with a few prisoners and captured spies, who are secured to carts and gun-carriages. The weapons carried by this strange army are those of the period which it is intended to represent, and look just as if they had been borrowed from the Tower of London for the occasion; large two-edged swords, lighter basket-hilted ones, halberds, spears of blood-curdling pattern, obsolete muskets and pistols, all help to give character and reality to the scene. One feels transported from the prosaic everyday life of the nineteenth century back to the romantic glamour of the seventeenth, of which the poetry alone, without the inconveniences, remains to us; and the mediæval appearance of the streets and houses goes far in preserving the illusion. As the last of this strange army vanishes, like the spirit of an age that is past, a bewildering feeling steals over one; the kind of bewilderment Rip van Winkle probably experienced on coming to life

once more; the kind of bewilderment one is a prey to as a child, when the merciless curtain descends on a brilliant transformation scene at the pantomime. It is difficult to banish the feeling of vague regret on being compelled to return to the outer world, to be swept on by the tide of 'improvements,' which have done so much to destroy the charm of little towns like Rothenburg.

THE STORY OF AN I.D.B.

'WELL, old man,' said an unfamiliar voice, as I was waiting for my train at Liverpool Street, 'you're not a day older. Going home to tea in the same old steady fashion? What, don't you know me? I should have known you anywhere!'

With puzzled eyes I turned and stared at a big bronzed bearded man whom I had no recollection of having seen before. He laughed loudly at my perplexity—so loudly that several people stared at us, which as a staid city man, hating to be conspicuous, I very much disliked. Consequently it was in no friendly fashion that I eyed the stranger who thus noisily claimed acquaintance.

'Don't you remember Harry Downham,' he said at last, 'who worked under you in that dog-hole of an office long ago—where I suppose you're still grinding on in the same old way? Shake!' he added peremptorily, thrusting out a huge sunburnt hand with which he grasped mine till my fingers were crushed. 'Now you must come and dine with me. Your wife? Oh! she won't mind your playing truant for once; and in a short time my masterful acquaintance and I were seated opposite each other in a well-known restaurant.

Yes, I did now remember him. But he was changed indeed from the slim young fellow who had been the flightiest clerk in the office, and whose shortcomings had, after innumerable grumblings on the part of the firm, led to his dismissal. Occasional surmises had since been indulged in by his former comrades as to his career, none of them of a complimentary kind, as I candidly remarked.

'They weren't so far wrong,' he answered carelessly. 'I was never fit for humdrum life and bricks and mortar. The wild freedom of uncivilised regions was my ideal. Would you like to hear my adventures? though your rigid respectability may be somewhat rudely shocked.'

Of course I assented. One always has a certain curiosity about an acquaintance who disappears in impecunious guise, and turns up years afterwards with all the external signs of wealth which Downham showed in rather too pronounced a fashion for good taste.

'Where have you come from?' I said, looking at his bronzed face curiously.

'From South Africa. Landed at Southampton two days ago. Am I going back? No, sir, not much. It wouldn't be healthy. The country's too hot—in all senses. I've made my pile, and am going to settle down in the south of France, where my sister's been living as a governess for years. Poor girl, she'll know what leisure and luxury are now; and there's a charming place I've bought there. Climate and surroundings

just suit me, for my chest, big as I look, sometimes gets wrong.

'What have I done in South Africa? All sorts of things. But my last and most, or rather sole, successful part was that of an I.D.B.'

I looked at him in some perplexity, for what he meant I could not guess.

He watched me with an amused smile. 'You seem puzzled, old man,' he said. 'It's nothing to do with dynamite (I started—being a nervous man). Not but what explosions of a sort are sometimes its consequence. I thought you knew what those mysterious initials meant. They're as plain in South Africa as A B C in your foggy island. I.D.B. means an Illicit Diamond Buyer. An illicit diamond is one which has been conveyed—good word that, Shakespearian isn't it?—from the mine in other than legal fashion. And there's a deal of legality, let me tell you, in diamond-digging. There's a big staff of officials to look after it. Illicit diamonds are usually found and disposed of by the Kafirs employed in the mines—though by no means only by them—and sold much below their value to—well—speculators like myself, who take their chance in view of the big profit.'

'What?' I gasped. 'Then you actually bought—stolen property!'

'Well,' he said, coolly refilling our glasses, 'that's perhaps your way of putting it here. It's not ours in South Africa. Besides, I think I've heard even in this respectable city of money-lenders buying reversions for a mere song, and speculators purchasing stocks and shares from despondent holders, knowing secretly that those stocks and shares were going up in a day or two with a bound. Also of houses and land bought, from private knowledge of a speedy demand for them, for a trifle, the sellers being quite ignorant of it. Haven't you heard of such things?'

I did not reply. I was too much upset. Here was I, a head clerk of many years' standing, dining and drinking champagne at the cost of an illicit diamond buyer.

'However,' he resumed somewhat tartly, 'I don't ask for your approval; I simply wanted to amuse you with the story of my adventures; so you may imagine I'm soliloquising.

'Why should the mining companies have the monopoly of all the diamond yielding districts?' he continued in a fierce tone (and I thought it best to drink my champagne since the bottle was opened and say nothing—these adventurers sometimes carry revolvers, I believe). 'There's a big profit in these things. The law is very stringent, and there's great difficulty in passing the stones from the finder to the I.D.B. But the profit tempts people—and in all classes too, let me tell you—to engage directly or indirectly in the traffic.

'I began very modestly, and as capital increased I increased my speculations. At last, suspicion was awakened, and I was searched, when leaving the Fields. But the searcher, though very pertinacious and clever, had been seen by me before I saw him. I was smoking a big Dutch pipe, and this gave me an idea.—"Sublime tobacco that from east to west!" You don't smoke yet, I suppose? No! Oh, you've missed a good deal of life's pleasures.—Well, I

popped my four diamonds into the big bowl, covered it with 'baccy, and went on puffing and chaffing the searcher, who was burning to distinguish himself. I knew this defeat would make him more pertinacious than ever. And so it was. Now I had bought of a Kaffir some stones of great value, and how to get them out safely puzzled me not a little. Some fellows under similar circumstances had recently tried various dodges which had long been popular, false boot-heels, hollow riding-whips, and so on, and in each case the diamonds had been discovered with very unpleasant consequences. For years of compulsory working at the break-water, for instance, may be the result, and yet I was determined to chance it rather than lose these stones, which I shall never forget for the trouble they cost me.

'After perplexing myself day and night—my enemy X always hovering about near me—a sudden idea flashed into my brain. I had a particularly ugly bulldog who was of a surly disposition, and was much laughed at on account of my fondness for him. This dog wore a thick collar which was a necessity, and that collar gave me the "tip." I removed it, cut slips in the inside and put the diamonds in them. As I was leaving the Fields, X of course pounced on me, and I affected a certain amount of uneasiness, which produced on his mind corresponding glee.'

Here Downham paused and opened his pocket-book, and from it he took the photo of about as ugly, ferocious, and disreputable a bulldog as was ever associated with heroes of the Bill Sykes class.

'Isn't he a beauty?' he said fondly, as he handed me the photo. 'I shall always love that poor dog; he died on the voyage home from the absurd prejudices of some of the passengers who didn't appreciate his playful nature—as I'm pretty sure—and pushed him overboard; at any rate he disappeared. Yes, sir, that dog got my best haul through!'

'Didn't X search him?' I timidly queried.

'Search him! Everybody gave him as wide a berth as they could—they were under delusions about him, pretty creature! No—poor Grip lay down, while the clever X was fussing about me, and growled at him. "Send that infernal dog of yours off," he said irritably, and little did he think when I obediently did so that he was sending off the biggest haul of I.D.s he was ever likely to find. Of course he found nothing on me, and his rage was a caution. However, he went off, and some days later I started homewards by leisurely stages.

'I felt pretty secure by this time, and carried the diamonds in my pocket. However, as the train left the station for Capetown, I chanced to see one of the diamond fields detectives jump into the guard's van. That was a sufficient hint to me to make things snug, but how to get rid of the diamonds this time I could not see, as Grip wasn't accompanying me that journey. Looking round the carriage, I saw a broken black bottle under the seat. There was my *cache*, as the Indians say.'

'But surely the detective,' I mildly interposed, 'would have looked under the seat?'

'Well, I suppose he would,' duly remarked

Downham, 'unless he were as big an idiot as—some people. Just wait, my good friend, before you credit a man with congenital idiocy.'

I shrank back silent. He looked fierce and dagger-like, and on the whole I began to wish I'd gone to Liverpool Street for some other train.

'What I did,' he resumed, 'was this: I wrapped up all the stones in pieces of newspaper, and carefully put them into the bottle, filling up the spaces by more paper as tightly as possible. Then I looked carelessly out of the window, smoking, but my eye always on the guard's van. When I saw nobody looking out—of course the chap thought I hadn't seen him, and was probably telling the guard what a fine haul he was going to make—I quietly dropped the broken bottle clear of the line, marking the spot—one's eye gets well trained out on the veldt, you know.

'At the next station up came the detective. They have power to search suspects, you know, and I was accordingly rummaged again. But this chap, Z let's say, was as unsuccessful and as riled as X. Of course I hadn't a diamond about me. And much indignation did I display. Some days later I went back to the place where I dropped my black bottle, found it and its contents intact. After that I had no more adventures with those stones, and they—partly—bought my place in the south of France.

'Yes, they're very clever those D.F.D.s, and have many people in their pay, both black and white, called "traps." They don't usually make mistakes, but they did in my case. What do you think?' concluded Downham, emptying his glass.

What I thought I certainly was not going to say, and, indeed, I hardly knew where I was. It was an awful experience for a steady-going man of business whose career has been as unruffled as a duck-pond. I parted from him, however, with much outward cordiality, but I have not seen him since. I sincerely hope that he will remain at his place in the south of France, which I shall carefully avoid if I ever visit the Continent.

A THRUSH'S SONG.

A SONG of exultation, strange and sweet.
What hidden dreams of Spring within thy breast
Console thee, in that passionate strain expressed?
A poor caged captive in a narrow street—
No respite from the fret of passing feet—
No listening mate, no outspread wing, no nest.
Yet visions of some inward charm possessed
Make blissful freedom of thy sad retreat.

If I, a captive singer, for one hour
Upon the confines of such joy might stand,
I too should share thy courage and thy power.
Give me one glimpse of thine enchanted land,
I too would utter transport. None should guess
A broken heart that sings of happiness.

E. BLAIR OLIPHANT.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 634.—VOL. XIII. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

UNITED STATES CURRENCY.

To an ordinary British citizen, a currency difficulty is something of a mystery. He goes about his daily business, settling his minor transactions in the gold and silver coin of the realm, with the occasional use in England of a five or ten pound note, and the more frequent one in Scotland of the pound notes in such active circulation. The weekly return of the Bank of England is about the last thing in the world he ever dreams of studying, and if he did, the chances are he would not understand it. He knows there is sufficient gold there to cash all the notes he is ever likely to have, and still leave a little in the vaults for the next comer, and consequently goes on his way with contentment. The cables from the United States, which have for some time past been published almost daily in the leading newspapers, are apt, therefore, to bother him, and he wants to know what all the fuss is about.

In the first place, the foundations on which the currencies of the two countries are built are radically different. The note-issuing institutions in Great Britain are joint-stock chartered institutions, in which the public are stockholders, and which are absolutely free from any departmental control of Government, although the issues are regulated by Act of Parliament. A certain reserve must be maintained in gold coin or bullion, and the balance must be covered by high-class interest-bearing securities, such as consols. But in the United States, the national Treasury is the issuing and controlling institution for the greater part of the note circulation, which is largely in excess, both actually and in proportion to population, as compared with this country. Notes are issued there from one dollar upwards, and coin, except for the fractional parts of a dollar, is unpopular and little used. The Treasury is legally enjoined to hold in reserve a certain amount of gold against its notes, a

much smaller percentage, however, than the Bank of England, and the remainder is covered simply by the national credit. When the Bank of England loses too much of its gold, it has to sell a portion of its securities to increase its stock; but when the United States Treasury is in a similar position, it has no negotiable securities to fall back upon, and is compelled, therefore, to borrow from the public. That is what is taking place at the present time, only as fast as the Treasury is replenished, the gold is drawn out again for reasons which we have now to consider.

The existing currency arrangements date no further back than the civil war, some four and thirty years ago. Previous to that period, there had been many rash experiments, and much ensuing trouble. As far back as the War of Independence, there had been a paper currency, and from that moment the nation might be divided economically into two camps, hard money men and soft money men. The former contended that all financial settlements should be effected in gold or silver dollars of full value; the latter always hankered to make legal tender something that was not as good as honest metallic dollars, and so inflate the currency. First one party and then the other gained the upper hand, but the result of a temporary victory of soft money principles was one of the worst panics the country has ever experienced, in the year 1837, when there was scarcely a solvent bank or mercantile establishment left in the States. Hard money then won the day, and in 1840 it was resolved that all payments made to or by the Treasury must be in gold or silver. That meant that all lands sold by Government had to be paid for in that way, and the principal object of inflation was to buy those lands cheap. With that wonderful recuperative power, which has been the marvel as well as the envy of the older European states, the United States shook off the effects of the disaster, and twenty years later, had practically liquidated their national

debt, and established their currency on a sound hard money basis.

Then followed the ever memorable struggle between North and South, which for several years engaged the attention of every active citizen, and brought the industrial work of the country almost to a standstill. Both sides were soon short of money, and had to resort to various expedients to raise it. The South issued Confederate bonds, and sold them for whatever they would fetch, many English sympathisers investing in them at low prices, only to lose whatever they put in them. The North began to issue the famous greenbacks, so-called from the colour in which the back of the notes was printed, and in February 1862, decreed by Act of Congress that they should be legal tender. At first they passed current for very nearly their face value, but soon underwent a rapid depreciation, and by the middle of the same year, were worth little more than half the gold or silver dollar. This process continued, until two years later the paper dollar was worth barely forty cents in good money. But in the meantime another step had been taken. The Government of the North found it quite impossible to go on issuing greenbacks in unlimited quantities, and like the South, was compelled to borrow in interest-bearing bonds. As an inducement to banks to subscribe freely for these, the National Bank Act was passed in 1863, by which properly constituted banks were authorised to issue notes up to ninety per cent. of the face value of any bonds they held and lodged with the Treasury. Thus came into existence the two principal paper issues of the United States, the greenbacks, or, as they are officially called, legal tender notes, and the national bank-notes.

Soon after the conclusion of the war, the struggle between the hard and soft money men was renewed. There was a fairly general consensus of opinion that the national debt, then somewhere about five hundred millions sterling, must be reduced, if not paid off entirely, but one side wished also to resume specie payments, while the other insisted on the greenbacks, amounting to about three hundred and fifty million dollars (£70,000,000), remaining inconvertible. It was decreed, however, that payment should be resumed on the 1st January 1879, and that for that purpose, the Treasury should never hold a less sum than one hundred million dollars in gold, or a reserve equal to nearly thirty per cent. The quantity in circulation was not to be increased; the nation was by that time again advancing in prosperity by leaps and bounds, debt was being rapidly discharged, and as the banks had to relinquish the bonds to the Government, they were compelled to withdraw the notes issued against them. Thus the very awkward predicament arose, of a rapidly increasing trade having to be carried on with a constantly decreasing currency, and a fresh agitation for inflation sprang up.

In the meantime, however, another very important event had happened; Germany had demonetised silver in 1873. Up to that year, the gold and silver dollar had always been of intrinsically the same value, but in Acts relat-

ing to legal tender, the gold dollar only was accustomed to be mentioned, probably only by accident, as there was then no idea that silver was about to undergo any severe depreciation. But when that metal began to fall rapidly in value, those interested in the silver-mines of the West conceived that they had been tricked, and joined hands with the soft money men for the reinstatement of the silver dollar in the currency as full legal tender. That meant in reality a change from a gold to a silver standard, because, when silver had depreciated twenty per cent., nobody would pay a gold dollar when a silver one worth eighty cents would discharge the debt. The outcome of the movement was the passing of the Bland Act in 1878, under which a quantity of silver was to be purchased by Government every month sufficient to coin two and a half million standard silver dollars. With great effort about fifty millions of these dollars were forced into circulation, until at last the American people rebelled, and would take no more of a coin nearly equal in size to our five-shilling piece, which, on account of its unwieldiness went at one time by the designation of 'a cart wheel.' But the coinage had to go on, in accordance with the Act, and the question arose, what was to become of it? It was answered by a decision to issue certificates against it, and so during the twelve years that the act remained in operation, silver certificates or notes for upwards of three hundred million dollars (£60,000,000) were issued, and put into circulation.

Everything apparently went well, and the prophecies of the bankers and capitalists of the Eastern States, to the effect that the country would pass to a silver standard, were entirely falsified. Two things had in fact been going on during those twelve years to delay the inevitable result—the expansion of the country required a constantly expanding currency, and the withdrawal of national bank-notes at the same time created an additional opening. The three hundred and sixty million silver dollars therefore, mostly in the form of paper, proved no incubus, and circulated side by side with the gold ones, particularly as they were tenderable to Government in payment of all taxes and customs duties. But in spite of the absorption of so much silver, that metal had gone on declining in value, and the silver party in America, determined to give it a lift, and emboldened by their previous success, sought to improve upon the Bland Act. In 1890 they substituted the Sherman Act for it, by which the Government was compelled to purchase every month four and a half million ounces of silver at the market price, deposit it in the vaults of the Treasury at Washington, and issue in payment to the sellers, notes payable in either silver or gold at the option of the Secretary to the Treasury. It had taken twelve years under the Bland Act to issue three hundred million paper dollars, but in three years of the Sherman Act, one hundred and fifty millions more were issued, at a time too when trade had begun to decline, when the redemption of debt had ceased, and the withdrawal of national bank-notes in consequence suspended.

It is not to be wondered at, that the long-deferred crisis eventually arrived, and the process of piling up liabilities against unrealisable assets had to be stopped. In the midst of another panic, only less severe than that of 1837, the Sherman Act was repealed; but the mischief had already been accomplished, and the United States, instead of the usual quick recovery, has been sinking deeper and deeper in the mire. European, and more especially British investors, fearful of having to accept silver in exchange for the gold they lent, have been withdrawing their capital wholesale, and demanding its repayment in gold. The Treasury has been constantly exhausted by the presentation of greenbacks for payment, to secure the necessary supplies; and in addition fully one half the Sherman notes, issued in payment for silver, have been presented and cashed in gold. The strain would have been less severe had all these notes so cashed been cancelled, or put away for future issue in prosperous days. But the ordinary finances of the country have fallen into confusion, the national expenditure has largely exceeded the national income, and deficit has been followed by deficit, until the total in three years will amount in all probability to thirty millions sterling. Instead of raising this money by increased taxation, or by borrowing on interest-bearing bonds, the notes presented for payment have been made use of, and paid out again in settlement of the ordinary demands on the Treasury, and so the candle has been burned at both ends. If Europe goes on selling its securities, there will not be anything like sufficient gold to pay for them, and the United States themselves will have to be taken in pawn.

There is one other form of currency still to be mentioned—namely, gold certificates. But these are only issued, dollar for dollar, against gold deposited with the Treasury and ear-marked, and they are only comparable to our sovereigns and half-sovereigns. Americans, however, dislike coin, and prefer money in this form, so that these certificates do not really enter into the present controversy at all.

President Cleveland is to be commiserated, and not blamed for the present state of affairs, at any rate in so far as it has not been intensified by his recent message on the Venezuelan question. He has boldly confronted, and sought to solve the difficulty, but has been hampered in every movement by an unsympathetic and adverse Congress, which refuses to adopt any scheme he proposes. The credit of the country, with its immense natural wealth, is practically unimpaired, and money could be borrowed in abundance on easy terms, were repayment guaranteed in gold. But Congress will sanction no gold loans, and the President is compelled to exercise such powers as he possesses, to borrow subject to repayment in coin, which may mean silver. The terms therefore are comparatively onerous, in order to cover the risk, and four and five per cent. has to be paid, where otherwise three would be ample. During the year 1894, loans for one hundred million dollars were made on this basis; at the beginning of 1895, another was issued for sixty-two million dollars; and at the present time,

arrangements are in progress for a further sum of one or two hundred million dollars, the fate of which is hanging in the balance as this article is being written. The net result so far, however, is that the debt of the country has been increased by upwards of thirty millions sterling, bearing an annual interest charge of one and a half millions, with the prospect of indefinite addition to both. A heavy price to pay, undoubtedly, for experiments in currency, and an attempt to bolster up silver.

The immediate outlook would be utterly hopeless, were it not that there is much truth in the well-worn saying, 'the darkest hour is that before the dawn.' People on both sides of the Atlantic who have been working for, and confidently predicting an improvement in the situation, now admit that there is no prospect of a settlement until another President and Congress have been elected, and are able to act in harmony, which cannot be until the 1st of March 1897. The settlement of what has become so complicated a matter could certainly not be effected in a day or in a month. Yet it is sometimes asserted that, if resolutely dealt with, the currency question might be a thing of the past ere President Cleveland leaves the White House. Some insist that it could be done without loss to the foreign creditor, and with small loss to the American community, if only the United States would frankly recognise that the amount of gold required to restore confidence and place the finances on a sound basis is actually not to be obtained, and so adopt a silver currency—although it is admitted that most of the methods by which it is proposed to carry out this change are absolutely dishonest. Other authorities are content to fix their hopes on the definitive dispelling of all doubt as to what the financial unit is to be, and on the centralisation of the national banking system—possibly by the development of the existing clearing-house system.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

CHAPTER VI.—IN THE EVENING.

In the evening the other part of the bargain began.

'My turn now,' I said. 'If I can only get this aching out of my shoulders. I am now going to be your coach—a judicious coach. The first point, I am told, that a judicious coach observes, is never to teach more than is wanted. And the next thing is to rub in what he does teach—to rub it in by incessant repetition.'

'It will be labour thrown away,' he grumbled. 'You will never make a fine gentleman of me.'

'My dear cousin, I am not going to try. I am, however, going to make of you a man acquainted with, and accustomed to, the usages of society. You are to belong to the world of society, not of fashion. The House of Commons has still a large majority of men who belong to that world. A knowledge of their habits, I

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have already told you, is absolutely indispensable.'

'Oh! Very good, then, I am ready.' But he was not eager; he was rather glum about the work in hand.

'Yes, but you must be more than ready. You must be as eager to learn this branch of knowledge as any other. Don't grumble over it—like an unwilling schoolboy.'

'Look here, Sir George'—

'Don't call me Sir George to begin with. You are my cousin. Call me George, and I shall call you Robert.'

'Very well. I confess I don't like it. How would you like to be told that you don't know manners? Hang it, the thing sticks.'

'Let us say then, the manners of the West End. Don't let it stick, old man. Now listen. First of all you must have dress-clothes, and you must put them on every evening.'

'What the devil does a man want with dress-clothes?'

'I will tell you when I have time. Meanwhile you must have them. The next thing is that from the moment you leave Wapping till you get home again, you are not to speak one word concerning your projects, or your ambitions, or your opinions.'

'I don't mind that condition. No one but yourself does know my ambitions.'

'Very well, then, that's settled so far. Now let us sit down and consider my scheme.' We had now reached my chambers, and we were in the study where the lathe was. 'I have been making out a little skeleton scheme—in my head.'

'Let us hear it.' We sat down solemnly opposite each other to discuss this question seriously.

'What do we want? To make you a man of the world. Some things you won't want to learn—whist, billiards, lawn-tennis, dancing.'

'No,' he grinned, 'not billiards or dancing—or betting, or gambling.'

'The first thing, the most important thing, is to get the dinner arrangements right. With this view we will begin with a course of restaurants. I don't say that one meets with the very finest manners possible at a restaurant, but still the people who go there have at least got a veneer; they understand the elements. I need not tell you much. You will look about you and observe things and compare and teach yourself.'

'Well? We are to waste time and money over a needless and expensive late dinner, are we? And all because there's a way of holding a fork.'

'It is part of the programme. After a while I shall take you to the theatre, which is sometimes a very good school of manners, and there you will see, on and off the stage, ladies in their evening splendour.'

'Jezebels. Painted Jezebels.'

'Not all of them. A few, perhaps, here and there. Later on you will be able to distinguish Jezebel. But it is best not to think about that

lady. Remember that a well-dressed woman has never come within your experience, and it is time for you to make her acquaintance. After a week or two of restaurants I will take you to a club and introduce you to some of our fellows. You can sit quiet at first and listen. Their talk is not exactly intellectual, but it shows a way of looking at things.'

'I know. Like you talk. Just as if nothing mattered, and everything was all right and as it should be.'

'Not dogmatic nor downright. Not as if we were going to fight to the death for our opinions.'

'If the opinion is worth having, it is worth defending. You ought to fight for it.'

'My dear cousin, formerly opinions were distinct and clearly outlined. Nowadays there is so much to be said on the other side that all opinions have grown hazy and blurred. For instance, you want perhaps to pull down the House of Lords.'

'No, I don't. I want to reform the House.'

'Well, if you did you would be astonished to learn what a lot can be said for the peers, and how extremely dangerous it would be to pull down their House, because the House of Commons leans against it, and all the houses in the country lean against the House of Commons. When you have grasped that fact, where is the clearness of your opinion? Gone, sir—gone.'

'You think that you will change me completely, then.'

'Not quite completely. Only in certain points. I shall try to graft upon you the manner of a finished gentleman. No one could possibly look the part better. You might be an earl to look at. Of course, the garb will have to be reconsidered—those boots, for instance.' Robert looked quickly at mine as compared with his own, and blushed. He blushed at his own boots. This was a note of progress. 'But all in good time. You shall not present yourself in a drawing-room until you can enter it, and stand in it, and talk in it, as if you belonged to the world of drawing-rooms.'

Robert entered upon his part of his education with much the same enthusiasm as is shown by a dog of intelligence going off to be washed. It has to be done; he knows that; and he goes, but unwillingly. Nobody has any conception of the numberless little points in which Wapping may differ from Piccadilly. Wapping, you see, has so long been cut off from external influences. The influence of the clergy, beneficent in other respects, is not felt at the Wapping dinner-table. And the Burnikels, by the retirement of the other old families, the aristocracy of the quarter, have remained almost the only substantial people of the place. Therefore, for a great many years, they have lived alone; and their manners, as a natural consequence, have continued to be much the same as the manners of their forefathers.

Take, for instance, the ordinary dinner napkin. It is astonishing to note how many mistakes may be made with a simple dinner napkin, when a man takes one in hand for the first time. There were no dinner napkins at

Wapping. There had been, many years ago, but they went out when forks came in. That is to say, so far as the children were concerned, just about two hundred years ago. The right handling of the dinner napkin can only be acquired by custom. So also with wine and wine-glasses. If you are perfectly ignorant of wine, except that the black kind is port, and the straw colour means sherry, and that either kind, but especially the former, may be exhibited on Sunday, you become bewildered with the amount of wine lore that one is supposed to know.

'You are getting on,' I remarked, after six weeks of almost heart-breaking work, because—I repeat that one would never believe that isolation could make such a difference—everything had to be learned. This young man was steeped in the things he had learned from books—political economy, history, sociology, philosophy, trade questions, practical questions—he was a most learned person; but of the things of which men talk, or men and women talk, he knew nothing, absolutely nothing. Art, poetry, fiction, the theatre, sport, games, things personal—which take up so large a share in the daily talk—on all these things he was mute. He came to the club with me, and sat perfectly silent; disdainful at first, but presently angry with himself for not being able to take a part, and with the fellows for talking on subjects so trifling.

'I'm a rank outsider,' he said. 'I heard one of them call me a rank outsider. Thought I couldn't hear him. If he'd said it in the street, I'd have laid him in the gutter. A rank outsider. Do you think, George, that you will ever make me anything else?'

'What does it matter if you are a rank outsider in some things? Patience, and let us go on.'

At first he grumbled; he could see no use in trifles, such as ceremonials of society. We have simplified these of late years; still, some forms remain.

'You will want to be received,' I told him, 'as a man of culture. These are the outward and visible forms of culture.'

He listened and reflected. Presently I observed that he took greater interest in things—he was realising what things meant. Finally, the recognition of things arrived quite suddenly. Then he grumbled no longer. He looked about him interested and amused. He sat out plays, and talked about the life pictured—a very queer sort of life it is, for the most part. As for the acting, he accepted the finest acting as part of the play, without comment. He was like an intelligent traveller—he wanted to know what it all meant, the complex civilisation of this realm: where the court comes in; what part is played in the daily life by the noble lords, whose House he was so anxious to improve for them, feeling quite capable of adjusting reforms and bringing the peers up-to-date by himself alone and unaided; how the church affects society; what are the powers and the limitations of money? what is the real influence of the press? what is the position of the professions? He wanted to know everything. As for me, I had never before asked

myself any of these questions, being quite satisfied with the little narrow world that surrounded me.

I tried to interest him in art. It was impossible: he said that he would rather look at a tree than the picture of a tree. I tried him with fiction. He said that the world of reality was a great deal more interesting than the world of imagination. I tried him with poetry. He said that if a thing had to be said it was best said in prose.

He wanted to survey the whole world, and to understand the whole world. When one assumes the attitude of an impartial inquirer and learns what can be said on the other side, the radical disappears and the reformer succeeds. There is, of course, the danger, if one inquires too long, and with more than a certain amount of sympathy, that the reformer himself may vanish, leaving the philosopher behind.

Robert was passing into the second stage. He snorted at things no longer; he rather walked round them, examined them, and inquired how they came.

'I confess,' he said, 'that I was ignorant when I came here. My knowledge was of books. Men and women I did not take into account. It is worth all the trouble of learning your confounded manners only to have found out the men and women.'

Here was the Reformer.

'The people at this end of the town,' he continued, 'are interesting partly because they have got the best of everything, and partly because they think themselves so important. They are not really important. The people who do nothing can never be important. The only important person is the man who makes and produces.'

Here was the Radical.

'You live in a little corner of the world; you are all living on the labour of others: you are beautifully behaved; you are, generally, I think, amiable; you look so fine and talk so well that we forget that you've no business to exist. It is a pleasure only to watch you. And you take all the luxuries just as if they naturally belonged to you. I like it, George; I am an outsider, but I like it.'

Here was the Philosopher.

'And what about the House?'

'Oh! I've begun to nurse my borough. I address the men every Sunday evening in a music hall. You may come and hear me, if you like.'

'What is your borough?'

'Shadwell, close by, where they know me and the boat-yard. The men come in crowds. Man! There is no doubt! They come, I say, in crowds. They fill the place; and mind you, I can move the people.'

'Good. If you can only move the House as well.'

'These fellows will carry me through. I'm sure of it. They are the pick of the working-men—Socialists, half of them—chaps, mind you, with a sense of justice.'

Here we had the Radical still.

'That means getting a larger share for themselves, doesn't it?'

'Sometimes. Motives are mixed. Well, I'm going to be Member for Shadwell—Independent Member. A General Election may at any moment be sprung upon us. And Lord! Lord! if I had gone into the House as I was six weeks ago!'

'Patience, my cousin, we have not quite finished yet. There's one influence wanting yet before you are turned out, rounded off, and finished up. Only one thing wanting, but a big thing.—No, I will tell you later on.'

MAKING RAILWAY TICKETS.

THE railway ticket is quite a modern invention. There were none of them when some of us were boys, for the simple reason that there were no railways. Once introduced into our social system, however, they have multiplied like microbes, and the manufacture, distribution, collection, tabulating, destruction, and remanufacture has become a large and complicated business, employing great numbers of people, requiring enormous quantities of material, calling forth curious feats of mechanical ingenuity, and organising powers of a very high order.

Last year there were issued in the United Kingdom considerably over nine hundred and eleven millions of railway tickets, exclusive of season tickets and workmen's weekly tickets. It is not easy to realise such a number. Roughly speaking, if they had to be conveyed, say, from London to Edinburgh in a mass, it would require a hundred railway trucks, each carrying ten tons. If they were stacked one upon another in a single column, the pile would be nearly five hundred miles high; and if they were laid end to end in a line, it would exceed the length of the equator by about one-third. But no computations of this kind can convey anything like so impressive an idea of the magnitude of the yearly issue of railway tickets as can be gained by a stroll through one or two of the establishments in which they are manufactured.

Up till a few years ago the bulk of our railway tickets came from private factories in London and Manchester. Latterly, the larger railways have been setting up establishments of their own for printing their tickets, which, however, they still buy from outside workers in the form of 'blanks.' It might reasonably be expected that where the numbers required are so vast, the printing would be done in large sheets to be afterwards cut up into tickets. This, however, is not the way it is done. Pasteboard is specially made for the purpose, but it is sliced up into 'blank' tickets, each to be printed and numbered one by one afterwards.

To see the complete process of ticket-making one must go first to the pasteboard factory with its vast storage of paper, its huge caldrons of steaming paste, its hot chambers for rapid

drying, and its maze of machinery for pasting, pressing, rolling, colouring, and cutting up the sheets of board when made. Every part of the work is interesting to one who is unfamiliar with it. The process of pasting the sheets of paper to be put together to form the board is one that strikes the novice as a particularly simple and ingenious one. Very thin but very sticky paste is poured into a trough beneath two wooden rollers, one above the other. The bottom one just touches the surface of the paste and thus takes to itself a thin film of the fluid which it transfers in a perfectly smooth, even layer to the roller above it. This in its turn gives a thin coating to the under side of the sheets of paper as they pass swiftly over the top. As each sheet comes out from the pasting machine it is seized by an attendant who puts four of them together to make the 'pasteboard.' These fourfold sheets are now stacked up in a pile, and a screw-press is brought heavily down upon them to squeeze out of them all superfluous paste and to consolidate the paper. They are next dried by passing through heated chambers on an ingenious system of revolving tapes, for three-quarters of an hour, or it may be an hour and a half, according to circumstances. Tremendous hydraulic pressure is now employed to condense the newly formed board into a hard uniform material, and this is still further effected by passing sheet by sheet between steel rollers. If there is any colouring to be done, this is the next proceeding, and the sheets are rapidly passed through a machine which draws along their surface strips of flannel saturated in the proper colours. The cutting up comes next, and for this every sheet passes singly through two machines. One slices it into long strips, and the next cuts the strips into thirteen parts, each part forming a 'blank' ticket. They are now ready for printing either in another department of the same establishment, or in the ticket-printing establishments which, as it has been said, several of the great railways have set up for themselves.

The Great Western Railway was one of the first companies to engage in this business. For many years this company had a queer little factory down by the side of their line at the back of Paddington Station; but they have now a large and specially planned stationery and ticket depot, not far off at Westbourne Terrace. Another large establishment of the kind forms part of Euston Station, from which they turn out about a million tickets a week. From the Great Eastern extensive printing and stationery depot at Stratford they distribute even a larger number, the passengers on this great network of railways being even more numerous, though journeys on the average are not so long. They issue an enormous number of season tickets; nevertheless, they print about fifty-five millions of ordinary tickets in the course of the year. The Midland print their own tickets at Derby. The mechanism and the general system are practically the same in all of these establishments, as well as in the private factories from one or two of which many railways in many distant parts of the world are supplied.

The printing-machines used in all these places vary somewhat in detail as improvements have been made on the earlier ones from time to time, but they are all alike in principle. They are very interesting pieces of mechanism. They will take the 'blanks' one by one, and, at a rate varying perhaps from ten thousand to fourteen thousand an hour, according to the character of the machine, they will print them—some of the machines, back and front—and number them consecutively. It is a curious process to watch. The blanks to be printed are placed in a pile in a sort of perpendicular spout that will hold some hundreds of them. This spout has an opening at the bottom, and when the machine is started, a little slip of metal, of just about the thickness of a ticket, makes a sharp dig at one end of the bottom blank and shoves it out from under the pile above it and starts it on a passage across the under side of a sort of bridge, a few inches long, connecting the two sides of the machine. The instant the blank shows its full length under the bridge, an inky forme pops up from below and prints its face, giving it at the same time a consecutive number, or two numbers if it is a return ticket. Here it would remain if it were not that another blank, pushed out in the same way, comes behind it and moves it on a stage, and a third comes behind the second, and a fourth after the third, and so on with the whole pile, each blank pushing its predecessors before it to receive the impression of the type. As each completed ticket arrives at the end of the bridge, a little metal plate, rather smaller than itself, bobs up beneath it and pushes it up into the bottom of another spout similar to the first, where it is caught by slight projections and held till the following one comes under it and heaves it up a little farther. Number three comes under number two, and number four under number three, and so on, the passage down one spout, across the bridge, and up the other side, being so swift that the eye cannot follow it unless the mechanism is slowed down for the purpose. If you take a perfect blank and tear a piece off it and put it in among the rest, it is curious to see how infallibly the machine will detect the irregularity. The mutilated little pasteboard goes jogging its way down the shoot among the rest, but the instant it comes to its turn to push out to be printed, there is a dead-stop. The mechanism flatly refuses to give its imprimatur to an imperfect blank, and it has to be removed before business can be resumed. It looks almost like a display of conscientious intelligence. The newest machines print back and front simultaneously, and the North Western Company have in addition a little contrivance which clips out a hole in the cardboard to indicate that it is a half-price ticket for a child, that being the plan adopted on this line instead of cutting the ticket in two diagonally as on most others.

This little contrivance, by the way, is the invention of the foreman in charge of the ticket-printing office at Euston, who also hit upon the improvement in the earlier forms of the machines by which the two printings were

done at once. The reward of this ingenious device should have been at least an important addition to the inventor's income for many years. He had no sooner got it to work, however, than he found, like Sir Fretful Plagiary, that somebody had appropriated his ideas before him. The thing had already been patented.

The numbering of the tickets, as it has already been said, is done by the machine, but it is so important a matter that it is considered expedient to check the accuracy of the enumerating part of the printing-machine by a second test. The completed tickets on removal from the receiving spout are therefore borne off to a second apparatus and deposited in another receiver, from which they are rushed through a counting mechanism at the rate of about twelve thousand an hour, the machine recording the number with all but infallible accuracy. If the records of the machines correspond with each other, it only remains now to tie the tickets up in convenient numbers. This is done by laying them in a sort of wooden tray with a screw arrangement for squeezing them together while they are tied round with twine ready for despatch to the various stations whose names they bear.

From these large depots of the several companies the new tickets are distributed all over the respective systems, and sooner or later most of them will find their way back again, dated and clipped, not a few of them broken and torn, dirty and disreputable in appearance. They have all of them done duty once, and some of them perhaps have been made to do it more than once. It may be that in the future they are destined, in another state of existence, to do pretty much the same round over and over again; for the original pulp of which they were made still has a market value, and they are only on their way back, it may be, to the paper-mill from which it is not improbable they have come. But as tickets they must first be so effectually destroyed as to obviate the possibility of further service without reconstruction from the very outset. They have all, of course, gone through the company's most elaborate system of book-keeping, and now they are done with. They are poured into a hopper such as one may see on the top of a mangold slicing-machine, and from the bottom of this they are discharged on to a broad, revolving leather band set with metal studs. By this they are carried forward, and, properly distributed, so as to insure that all shall be effectually destroyed, are tipped over among whirling blades that chop them up in fragments and shoot them down through a spout into a sack, which the machine will fill in a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes. As soon as a sack is filled, the mouth of it is tied up, and it is stowed away until a sufficient pile has accumulated, and the paper-maker comes and carries them off to the mill to be pulped and made again into paper, to be very likely used up again into pasteboard, and so to go out on another circular tour. It is an interesting process to follow through, but there is nothing in it half so interesting as the reflection that the whole of the vast system of organisation

and mechanism, of which this is only a very small incidental feature, has been completely evolved within the memory of all who have lived to about middle age.

THE GIRDLETON GALLERY MYSTERY.

CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

FOUR days passed, and no answer came from Annie Girdleton. Eltham had not looked for a prompt reply, since his ignorance of her address at Chester had obliged him to write to her at the St John's Wood house; but when the fifth and sixth days came and went without bringing a word, he began to fear that in the bustle preparing for the move to her new residence in Bayswater, Mrs Girdleton must have omitted to forward his letter. He chafed at the delay, for Welks had not come near him again, and he feared that the man had fulfilled his implied threat and sold his invaluable information to some private inquiry agent or detective who would speedily outstrip himself in the race.

The answer came at last, however; Eltham found it on his dinner-table one evening on returning to his lodgings, and pouncing hungrily upon it, threw himself into the arm-chair to luxuriate in the contents. It was plump to the touch: without doubt she had taken advantage of the 'peculiar circumstances' also, to relieve her feelings at the point of the pen. It was disappointing to find that the letter's portly form was due to a blank sheet accidentally enclosed; but no such hint was necessary to prove that the five lines composing the note, which lacked superscription, signature, and punctuation, had been written in great agitation.

'I did send the letter to the gallery but I cannot tell you anything more I must not I can't and if you care for me don't ask why you would not if you knew how I have suffered since.'

The sheet fluttered from Eltham's hand. He lay back in his chair, and cold perspiration broke out on his face as something that was more than suspicion seized him. His investigations were at an end; no need to ask why she could not answer his question; her note seemed to have torn a veil from his eyes, and piece by piece the evidence ranged itself to point with unsparing directness at Annie herself. He was almost surprised that he had not seen it before.

It went cruelly against the grain, but he was forced to admit that even without this incoherent note there was a case against her. Mrs Girdleton had spoken of the unpleasantness of their home life latterly. Eltham knew that Annie had bitterly resented the good-humoured contempt with which her father had 'stopped the nonsense' as he phrased it; Mr Girdleton

had tactlessly exhibited his disregard of her feelings until their relations grew so strained that Mrs Girdleton had plucked up courage to arrange for her daughter to leave home for a time. The picture had been cut on the day before she left London; and on that day—well, there was the information drawn from Mrs Markham's page. And if this letter was not the confession born of remorse, what could it be? But how should Annie have known that Welks' wife was ill? Eltham clutched at the straw—to find it a straw.

Memory promptly reminded him that on almost the last occasion he dined at his employer's, Mr Girdleton had told his wife, across the table, that 'Peters' children were down with mumps,' and Mrs Girdleton had replied, 'I will see about the soup and things to-morrow morning,' in a tone which showed that she received such news as notice that modest luxuries were expected. Mr Girdleton was a kind master and cared for the wants of his dependents when they or their families were ill. The intimation that Mrs Welks was ill, would have been given as a matter of course, and Annie would have heard of it.

Well, there was an end to the business, anyhow; no offer of reward would produce the missing portion of the Raphael; without doubt Annie had destroyed it for fear of detection, before she realised the extent of the mischief she had done. Poor child; she must have suffered terribly ever since.

'You are looking seedy this morning,' said Mr Girdleton, stopping at Eltham's desk on his way to his own room, next day. He eyed the young man keenly, and his tone was the tone of accusation, not of sympathetic inquiry.

'It's nothing; I slept badly last night.'

Mr Girdleton drummed with his knuckles upon the desk for a minute; then told Eltham to come inside.

'You promised me that you would not hold any communication with my girl,' he said, 'and a couple of days ago a letter addressed to her in your handwriting came to my house. I don't know and don't care what prompted you to break your promise; you chose to do it, and the letter was sent on.'

Eltham could not explain: he stood looking miserable.

'Also I have seen the man Welks hanging about here, and am told by Peters that he comes to see you; that you had given him money, and had promised to try and get him a job. Now, Eltham, this looks bad; it shows a nasty spirit towards myself considering the circumstances under which I turned the man off.'

Eltham coloured, began to say that he had given the man money, remembered himself, and broke off abruptly. Mr Girdleton lay back in his chair, and looked into vacancy tapping his finger-tips.

'You told me, after what passed between us on a certain occasion, Eltham, that you wished to leave. I dissuaded you for your own sake and your mother's; I see now that I made a mistake.' He paused as if expecting an answer; at another time Eltham would have expressed his readiness to take a month's notice; to-day

he was too dull and dispirited to try and save his dignity.

'I think we had better part, Eltham; I don't wish to deal hardly with you, but you have not treated me fairly in the two matters I've referred to, and my faith in you has been badly shaken. You had better look out for something else to do. I'll give you three months' salary or a quarter's notice, which ever you prefer.'

Eltham said he would decide that day, and went out, conscious of a vague sense of injustice.

'I wonder if he thought I wrote asking Annie to bolt with me,' he thought, as he took his seat. 'He must feel bitter against the wretched Welks.'

To clear himself by telling Mr Girdleton the truth, was out of the question: it did occur to him to write again to Annie and tell her how he was placed, when she—if he knew her aright—would surely confess and enable him to clear himself. But the idea of putting any such pressure upon her was repugnant to him; and, after all, when she heard of his dismissal and the reasons, through her mother, she would of course make a clean breast of the matter. Meantime, he would look out for something else to do.

'Pleasant interview?' inquired Dean, the correspondence clerk, with a sympathising grin.

'Sack,' responded Eltham briefly. 'I'll tell you about it presently.'

Mr Girdleton was out of temper that day; this misfortune was plain to every one before he had been in the office an hour. One clerk got a wiggling for laughing out loud, another was threatened with dismissal for misdirecting an envelope, and a third was told that if he couldn't copy a letter without missing out half-a-dozen words in each page, he had better go back to school again.

'It's a blessing the old man has to go out to-day,' remarked Dean, 'though I don't envy him a journey to the Surrey side on a morning like this.'

It was more like a January day than one of mid-July, wet, stormy, and raw; the streets were deserted, and the man at the one turnstile in use yawned for lack of occupation; the only visitors were stray country cousins who, Peters said, did each a shilling's worth of harm to the carpets with such muddy boots and dripping waterproofs.

'It's the Bidder meeting-day, isn't it?' said Eltham. 'I had forgotten it.'

Depression reigned within and without; but there was a general clearing of brows when Mr Girdleton came out of his room and sent for a hansom, announcing that he should be back at four o'clock.

'Say half-past five,' remarked Dean, when his employer had gone. 'I never knew the function over earlier.'

When Master Jonas Bidder of the Worshipful Company of Wheelwrights, was gathered to his fathers at the end of the seventeenth century, he bequeathed the rents yielded by a certain piece of land on the Surrey side of the river to trustees, citizens of substance and good repute,

who were to administer the same for the benefit of the deserving poor of the parish. The value of Master Bidder's property having increased about three hundredfold since his lamented decease, the trust had attained dimensions involving considerable responsibility, and the trustees fairly earned their fees, and the 'fayre satisfying dinner' to which they were by will entitled once a quarter. This dinner was to be eaten at 'four of the clock,' and Master Bidder had prescribed that all business should be done first—a provision which appears to indicate that the testator understood his kind. Lately, however, three eminent Q.C.s had mercifully given it as their opinion that it would not invalidate the will of Master Bidder if the meal were eaten at 1.30 and called lunch; so the hour had been changed; and as the trust solicitor, the clergy of the parish, and one or two others had to attend, that 'fayre satisfying' dinner was always a very pleasant little gathering indeed.

'It's a ghastly day to drag a man over here to eat his lunch,' said Mr Bent, the senior trustee, as he shook hands with Mr Girdleton.

'A great nuisance for a busy man in any weather,' said Mr Girdleton. It had been the fashion ever since the trust was founded, for the trustees to regard themselves as martyrs.

'I suppose you haven't heard anything from the Scotland Yard people yet?' queried Mr Bent.

'Not a word. They told me the other day, they believed that the piece had been taken abroad.'

'There isn't a detective worthy of the name in London,' said Mr Bent. 'Now, in Paris they'd have laid the rascals by the heels within a week.'

The other trustees arriving in a body at this moment, the solicitor and the vicar produced their accounts for last quarter, and scheme of charity for next; which were rather hastily approved, for lunch had been announced.

It was a very jovial party: the Lion Hotel has an admirable cook, and he always does his best to reconcile the Bidder trustees to that clause in the will which insists that the quarterly meeting and dinner shall be held on the Bidder estate. It was raining hard, and the trustees, conscience-clear, having transacted the business and drawn their fees, were inclined to make the most of the occasion; so after lunch they adjourned to the billiard-room for pool. It was five o'clock when Mr Bent observed that he must be off, and the party broke up.

'This isn't mine, waiter,' exclaimed Mr Girdleton with singular vehemence, returning the hat that functionary offered with his coat, 'That's not mine; find my hat at once; my name's in it.'

'Is it an antique, Girdleton?' inquired a humorous fellow-trustee in surprise at his heat.

Mr Girdleton took no notice of the chaff; for the waiter in all humility was expressing his profound regret. The gentleman who had just gone must have taken Mr Girdleton's hat by mistake. Should he run after—

'No,' snapped Mr Girdleton, 'give me his,

and help me on—quick!’ and he ran out of the hotel, his overcoat half-way up his arms.

‘Bent will go across Hungerford Bridge,’ called the trustee who had made the little joke about antiques.

Mr Girdleton heard, and ran along the street at his best pace; the rain had stopped, but the wind had increased since the morning. It was only a few hundred yards from the hotel to the bridge, and Mr Girdleton ran regardless of the cheers of the little boys, who assured him he ‘would win.’ Arriving at the bottom of the wooden gangway which runs up to the foot-bridge beside the railway, he saw his friend turn the corner at the top, his hand to the hat which did not belong to him. Mr Girdleton felt the one he wore too large, and the sight of Mr Bent holding on to the misappropriated hat seemed to inspire him afresh. He panted up the slope and raced along the bridge, shouting; Mr Bent heard him at last and stopped.

‘You—took my—hat,’ gasped Mr Girdleton, breathless with exertion as he came up.

‘Now, I *thought* it was small for me,’ smiled Mr Bent. ‘I’m so sorry’—his hand went up to his head with apologetic haste. Mr Girdleton nearly shrieked aloud; for his friend touched the hat below the brim, the wind caught it, and off it went. It alighted on the rail, hesitated for the fraction of a second, and took a suicidal leap into the river.

‘Girdleton, you shouldn’t run like that; you look quite pale, man. D’you feel ill?’

‘It’s gone,’ came from Mr Girdleton’s lips, as he watched his property dancing seawards on the wavelets.

‘I’m awfully sorry for my clumsiness and stupidity.—No, no, keep mine and send it back. And, Girdleton, I must see you into a cab; really you look very ill.’

Mr Girdleton admitted that he felt ‘rather giddy,’ and allowed himself to be escorted back to the Surrey side, where a cab was soon procured.

‘Bond Street,’ said Mr Girdleton faintly, as he got in. Mr Bent studied his face for a moment; then gave the cabman Mr Girdleton’s private address and got in with him.

‘I’ll just see you home,’ he said; ‘it isn’t out of my way.’ And Mr Girdleton’s faint protest only the more strongly convinced his friend that he ought to have somebody with him.

Meantime a peaceful day at the gallery was drawing to its close; five o’clock came bringing no Mr Girdleton, and six, and quarter-past. At half-past six, Dean declared his certainty that ‘the old man’ would wish them not to wait longer, and the rest agreed. Eltham alone remained to write some letters before going home. It was after seven o’clock when, having finished his correspondence, he stood at the door opening his umbrella in preparation for the walk down the rain-swept street.

‘Pardon, gentleman, please,’ said a miserable-looking man at his elbow, ‘is this ‘ere the Girdleton Gallery?’

‘Yes; but what do you want?’

‘Me and my mate picked up this ‘ere on the water,’ said the man, producing the disreputable

remains of a silk hat from under his ragged coat; ‘it’s got the gentleman’s name in it, and maybe he’d give me a sixpence for my trouble bringing it.’

Eltham glanced at the name to which the man pointed; it was his employer’s hat without doubt, but in its present condition it was not worth the sixpence referred to. It was a pure begging errand, but the fellow looked so wet and wretched, that Eltham, bidding him come in out of the rain, searched in his pocket for the coin desired.

‘There’s a shilling for you,’ he said, touched by a hollow cough which instinct told him was not the artistic stroke of the professional beggar. ‘You’d better leave the hat,’ he added, more as a matter of principle than for any other reason, seeing that the man eyed it with the eye of an appraiser, doubtless with the view of sale at a third-hand clothes-shop.

‘Thank’ee, sir; thank’ee kindly,’ and he crept out.

‘Blown off crossing the bridge, I suppose,’ thought Eltham, poking the wreck with his umbrella. ‘I’ll just put it in his room since it’s been brought back.’

He lifted the hat on his umbrella, and it struck him that it was heavier than even a soaked hat ought to be. The lining was torn at the seam, and idle curiosity to see how silk hats are made prompted him to pull it apart. As he did so he started. Surely, surely Lincoln and Bennett never— He put down his umbrella, shut the office door and lit the gas. Then to the hat again; he turned up the sodden leather lining and pressed back the silk. For fully five minutes he sat staring into the hat he held in both hands. He could not realise what lay before his eyes; amazement, joy, and half-a-dozen conflicting emotions whirled through his brain and stunned him. For there, carefully fitted in between the silk and the outer skin of the hat, was the lost piece of the Raphael!

It was some little time before he recovered from the shock of this astounding discovery: when he did, he got paper and made the hat and its precious contents into a parcel. He was rapidly grasping the value of the find to himself and knew what he was going to do. Before leaving the office, he wrote a line to Annie Girdleton saying that he now understood her note, and respected the feeling which prompted it. And in his heart he hated himself for having suspected her.

‘She was his unconscious tool,’ he thought, as he walked homewards with that thrice precious parcel under his arm. ‘He gave her the note to leave, and followed it up with his knife when the coast was clear. Well, we will have another interview to-morrow morning, and I hope he will enjoy it.’

Eltham was greatly exercised that night to know why Mr Girdleton should have done such an injury to the most valuable work he had ever possessed. He was far too experienced and shrewd to have imagined for a moment that the resultant sensation, no matter how assiduously fanned, would produce results at all commensurate with the damage done. Of course it was a foregone conclusion that he meant to

'discover' the piece himself and enjoy another innings, but even with that addition it was dead loss.

'And really,' thought Eltham, with the careless generosity of power, 'I don't see why he should not have another innings if he likes. I wonder whether he took the detectives into confidence or bamboozled them.'

He was on the best terms with himself next day when he knocked at the door of the Girdletons' new house in Queen's Square; a message had come to the gallery to tell them that Mr Girdleton was confined to the house with a bad cold. Twice a message was sent down that his employer could not see him; but a pencilled note to say 'hat restored and safe with me,' procured him instant admission to Mr Girdleton's bedroom, where, we have it on the highest authority, the pair remained closeted for an hour and a half.

What passed between them during the interview, nobody knows. Mrs Girdleton, happening to intrude without knocking, heard her husband say, 'I'll take Trotter's opinion before closing such a bargain another time,' before he could ask with a snarl if she did not know he was engaged. Mrs Girdleton knew very well what opinion her husband had hitherto entertained of Mr Trotter as a critic, so she was naturally a good deal surprised. Then, a few minutes later, she had occasion to go into the dressing-room, and through the door of communication overheard her spouse say in answer to a question whose purport she did not catch: 'Only safe place I could think of, and had had it there all the week while changing houses,' which was a very odd thing to say, she thought.

What followed the interview, everybody concerned remembers distinctly. Eltham lunched with Mrs Girdleton, and returning to the gallery in course of the afternoon, mentioned casually that he was going to stay on, after all. Annie, next morning, received letters from her mother and from Eltham, couched in a strain which brought her back to London at once; and ten days later, when Mr Girdleton was able to leave his room (it was a bad cold and turned to influenza), Eltham came to dinner and placed on Annie's finger an engagement ring, while her father looked on and smiled. These things happened last July, and important developments are imminent, though Eltham's salary has not been raised (if the gallery pay-sheet is reliable), and the defect of age has been mended by only a twelvemonth.

Mr Welks has resumed his duties as night-watchman, and his inability to throw any light upon the events of that Sunday is the despair of everybody in the gallery: it is his peculiar humour to refer to Richard Eltham as 'the gov'nor,' though Mr Girdleton has not retired. The more robust section of the press, getting wind of something, winked in paragraphs for a while and let the matter drop; but Scotland Yard preserves an impenetrable reticence. From the circumstance that Mr Girdleton frequently refers with admiration to the wonderful sagacity of the London detective department, and declares he has not yet given up hope, there is reason

to suppose that the stolen piece of the Raphael will be publicly discovered before long; perhaps this season, if there be room for a sensation.

AN OLD GEOGRAPHY.

SOME few years ago, a couple of schoolboys were exploring a traditional smugglers' cave under a chalk cliff on the Kentish coast. Shut in by the tide, they climbed to an almost inaccessible ledge near the roof of the cavern, not because there was any danger from the sea, but to while away the time in true boyish fashion. Lying there was an old leather-bound volume, a Geography of the date 1716. Perhaps a studious smuggler, or a colleague of Exciseman Gill, or, possibly, another school-lad of the days of George I., had laid it down, to be found, long years afterwards, a relic of the times when a youngster could still revel in dreams of great undiscovered lands, of buccaneering on the Spanish Main, or of hot brushes with Mounseer in the Channel. Maybe, a tragedy of drowning or of sudden death in fierce conflict on a coast which abounds in memories of bloody frays, was the reason for the book being left in this out-of-the-way spot. Anyhow, there it was, in excellent preservation, and with the name of Thomas Gibbs of Canterbury fairly set forth in good old copy-book style on the first page. On the supposition that every average boy knows more or less what a school geography is, this standard work of 1716 would be interesting to him if only for the maps. As regards the story of our own empire, however, a perusal would be still more so. In glancing at the contents, we must remember that it means not simply a contrast between a text-book of nearly two hundred years ago and one of to-day, but a comparison between our empire of then and now, and a look at the various political changes and geographical discoveries which have come to pass since the adventures of Alexander Selkirk gave birth to Robinson Crusoe.

The author, in dedicating his work to the Archbishop of Canterbury, piously expresses an earnest wish for the conversion of the Jews, which prayer would seem to show that the Israelites must have made quick headway here since Cromwell allowed them to enter the country little more than half a century previously. In the maps, California appears as an island; whilst that portion of America lying between Hudson Bay and Behring Strait is a blank. Indeed, the coast from California to Behring Strait is not marked out. Much the same may be said of the interior of Asia, and of course New Holland, or Australia, as we now call it. The strait between Tasmania and the mainland has not yet been discovered by Bass, who was afterwards to languish out the remainder of his existence in the depths of a South American mine. New Zealand

figures as a mere bit of vague shading; and the Sandwich Islands, where Captain Cook had yet to meet his fate, are nowhere. The most curious and interesting thing about the maps, however, is, that two large equatorial lakes are given as the sources of the Nile; and the Niger is made to flow from another great lake situated near where Tchad is now known to be. Thus it seems that the Nyanza lakes and Tchad were known by hearsay early in the last century. Stanley, indeed, has stated that some old Venetian maps indicated their existence.

So much for the progress of discovery; but what about political changes since 1716, especially with regard to our own empire? Canada belonged to France, and England possessed her Plantation colonies, which were by-and-by to become the United States; but the bulk of known America—with the exception of a few islands and a fringe of coast here and there—was ruled by Spain. On the map of Europe, Turkey is credited with sovereignty over Hungary and Greece, although the author remarks that the Hungarians had 'almost recovered from Ottoman slavery by the late successful progress of the Imperial arms'—grim experiences, in which the Elector of Hanover, afterwards to rule over these islands as George I., smelt powder and bore himself in a very soldier-like fashion. Finland and the Baltic Provinces are set down as Swedish territories. Poland has a map to herself, as a powerful and independent nation. Belgium is called a circle of the German empire; Corsica, a Genoese island; and Naples, a Spanish viceroyalty. Greater Britain was indeed in its infancy, for, with the exception of our American colonies, we had then but few foreign possessions—Canada, South Africa, and India being as yet unconquered, and Australia hardly known. We read that 'the king of Sweden is indeed a powerful prince both by sea and land.' The Czar is praised for his late visits to foreign countries, but roundly rated for his recent attempt on his Christian neighbour, Sweden. These were the days of Peter the Great and the birth of modern Russia as a European power, when the Crimea was Turkish, and Caucasasia and Central Asia as yet untrodden by victorious Muscovite legionaries. Little did the half-savage champion of civilisation dream in his most ambitious moments that the time would come when Cossack and Red Coat would confront one another as sentinels on the north-west frontier of India!

We read further on that in France 'the present monarch for despotic power may now vie even with the Emperors of Muscovia, China, and Turkey.' '89 and the Terror were still far distant; and Louis XV., who bequeathed the *Peluge* to his ill-fated successor, had only just begun his long reign of waste and wickedness. The Bastille was in constant use; and Voltaire—whose writings did something to bring about the Revolution—was as yet a young man, unknown to fame. We learn that 'the Dutch have lately advanced themselves to such a

height of power and treasure as to become terrible even to crowned heads,' but then men were still living who had heard the Dutch cannon thundering in the Thames. Among the nine Electors of Germany, the Dukes of Bavaria, Saxony, and Brandenburg are mentioned; and the Empire consisted of more than three hundred States. The heroic campaigns of the Great Frederick brought Prussia to the front in the last century; the ruthless invasions of Napoleon smashed up the old multiplicity of petty sovereignties at the beginning of the present; and Bismarck and Moltke in our own times have created the united Germany of to-day. In Spain, all religions other than the Romish were 'expelled by the tyranny of the bloody Inquisition,' a state of things which lasted well into the times of our grandfathers. Italy is described as consisting of half-a-dozen Dukedoms, the territories of the Pope, four Republics, and the Viceroyalty of Naples, 'miserably flayed by those hungry and rapacious vultures the Spaniards.' This is very much the style of expression used by the hero of *Westward Ho!* Italy remained in this chaotic condition until Garibaldi and his fellow-patriots worked out the unity of the youngest of the six great powers. Our geographer was not long in noticing, during his travels in the Levant, that modern Greek differed much from the ancient in the pronunciation. 'The whole of Greece doth now groan under the Turkish yoke.'

The spelling of Scotch names seems to have been somewhat uncertain. For example, we find in the list of counties, Boot, Arran, Argile, and Edenburgh. Scotland gets a good character just after the Union from the patriotic author, Mr Gordon, whether on the score of products, religion, or education. 'No Christian society excels the Scotch for their exact observance of the Sabbath.' Orkney islanders seldom died of the physician, but lived to a great age. The Shetlanders still spoke the Norse tongue. The Icelanders were remarkable for great bodily strength and longevity, and commonly lived in dens or caves 'keeping up their ancient idolatry.'

Formentaria in the Balearics was uninhabited on account of serpents. Malta was governed by the Crusading Knights of St John. The Ionian Islands belonged to Venice, who had just lost Crete, after a bloody and protracted struggle with the Turks. Fancy the Sick Man as a conqueror nowadays! 'At a Greek monastery in Cyprus are a number of cats so nicely bred for the hunting of serpents, that at the first sound of the convent bell they will immediately return home.' This sounds very like the hoax of some mendacious monk.

Turning to Asia, we read that some remarkable volcanoes exist in Tartary, India, and China. In spite of this error, however, the author has a truer idea of the variety of languages, religions, and races in the dominions of the Great Mogul than the average Englishman of to-day has. 'Some Jews dwelling on the shores of the Caspian are thought to be descendants of the lost ten tribes.' Tea is not named among the products of China; but 'tassaries and satins' are given among those of India. A pillar near Scanderon Bay is considered by

the writer to mark the exact spot where Jonah was vomited by the whale, 'being nearer to Nineveh than any other place in the Levant.' Noting the deplorable state of Palestine under the Turks, our big cities are bidden, as dens of iniquity, to take warning. The statements that the 'Japanners' are tall, and that Adam's Peak, in Ceylon, is a volcano, are, to say the least of it, inaccuracies.

Coming to Africa, we learn that Algiers and Tunis were two potent Republics, much given to piracy. 'In Loango, it is usual to sell human flesh publicly in the shambles, as other nations do beef and mutton'—a curiously precise anticipation of what was reported of some Congo tribes at the British Association in 1895.

With respect to America, we are told that New Spain, or Mexico, is governed by a Spanish Viceroy. 'California, formerly esteemed a peninsula, is now found to be entirely surrounded with water, a dry, barren, cold country, still in the hands of the natives.' The French of Canada were about six thousand in number, and traded chiefly in furs. 'This is all that is noteworthy about it.' The French also owned a great part of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland; and we are reminded of our fishery dispute with France by the statement that 'after the late tedious war, we are now in full possession of what we formerly enjoyed.'

'In the English colonies, no tax can be imposed without the consent of their assemblies,' a fact which it would have been better had George III. remembered fifty years later. Enthusiasm chiefly prevailed in Pennsylvania, 'that country being stocked with Quakers.' Our author attributes such fierceness to the condor, that he says: 'Chile would not be habitable were that destructive bird less rare.' As for Jamaica, which was then, perhaps, our wealthiest colony, the recent terrible earthquake of 1692 is ascribed 'rather to moral than natural causes, on account of the abominations of the inhabitants calling for judgment from Heaven.' The planters are solemnly warned to care for the despised souls of their negro slaves, and not to believe and be frightened by the vulgar error that baptism of slaves means giving them freedom. We are assured, on the authority of eye-witnesses, 'that the crocodile of Hayti before lying in wait to catch prey, swallows several hundredweight of pebbles, by which additional weight he can the sooner dive with his victim.'

Our geographer appends a very clear table of the five great colonial empires of 1716—namely, the Spanish, English, French, Dutch, and Portuguese. It is impossible to glance at this old book without being struck by the magnitude of the revolutions which have taken place in the last two centuries through scientific progress, geographical discovery, and political changes. In 1716, Sweden, Holland, and Turkey were still regarded as mighty factors in European wars and complications; the Great Mogul was still considered one of the most powerful monarchs of the world; and the empire of the king of Spain might still be described as one on which the sun never set. Australia, New Zealand, and almost the whole interior of Africa, were blanks; and the gigantic

Republic of America undreamed of by the most ardent imagination. But the most striking fact of all is, whether under the Union-jack or the Stars and Stripes, the stupendous march of the Anglo-Saxon race.

A WEST AFRICAN STORY.

By the Author of *Rising of the Brass Men*.

BEHIND the coast-line of West Africa, from the Gambia to the Congo, lies a wild country of dense forest and dismal swamp intersected here and there by sluggish rivers and shallow lagoons. Although the Portuguese, Dutch, and English have traded along the coast for more than four hundred years, civilisation has but lightly touched the savage inhabitants of the interior, and 'battle, murder, and sudden death,' the 'Ju Ju' or fetich worship, with its horrible rites of human sacrifice, and in many places cannibalism, are prevalent.

In British dominions, a few District Commissioners and other officers in charge of small detachments of Haussas, who are Mohammedan black troops, maintain, or struggle to maintain, some kind of order along the frontier, among many thousands of savages.

Now it happened that one morning in April, Captain Wayne, in command of a dozen Haussas, sat out on the veranda of his house, which was situated near the head-waters of a muddy river on the frontier of the Gold Coast and the Shantee country, and looked across the misty landscape that lay before him. By-and-by as the sun rose the mist gathered itself together into heavy wreaths and rolled away to seek a hiding-place till nightfall among the swamps, leaving open to view mile after mile of dense forest that stretched away to the blue line of distant mountains on the northern horizon, while near at hand three winding rivers and a wide lagoon lay glittering in the early sunshine.

The captain lay wearily back in his chair, haggard and yellow-faced from constant attacks of the malaria fever, the scourge of the land, and oppressed by the intense loneliness, for he had seen no white man for more than a year. Instead of the slight coolness that might have been hoped for in the morning breeze, the air was hot and heavy with the smell of vegetation rotting in the swamps and the river mud.

At this moment, Akoo, sergeant of Haussas, came up the stairway leading to the veranda, and saluting the officer, said: 'Bush man come in, sah, bring little word, say Kasro people chop two men, make Ju Ju.'

'Hang the Kasro people,' said the captain aside. 'I must stop the Ju Ju sacrifice, and yet if there's any bloodshed, it will mean the sending up of an expedition, and unending trouble. Akoo, get ten men ready, rifles and twenty rounds of ammunition.'

The sergeant saluted as he went away, and shortly afterwards a bugle-call rang out and Captain Wayne, weak and trembling from fever, marched into the forest at the head of his men. Tall, splendidly developed negroes from the far north, staunch Mussulmans, lighter in colour and in every way superior to the coast tribes, the Haussas will follow their white officers with a courage and devotion equal to that of any of Her Majesty's troops.

Meantime, in the Shantee town of Kasro, a great Ju Ju feast was being held at which the chief administered justice, and various rites were performed by the fetich men to propitiate their gods. The mud-built, palm-thatched huts lay in rows beneath the shade of feathery palm trees around a great open square. In the centre of this, beneath the shade of a huge tree consecrated to the Ju Ju or fetich gods, sat chief Kasro, attired in a cast-off steamboat officer's uniform and a dragoon's brass helmet. Over his head stretched the spreading arms of the tree from which hung long strings of charms, human skulls, bones, sharks' teeth, leopards' claws, and similar odds and ends, the symbol of the fetich authority, for over native warfare, trade and justice, or rather injustice, the Ju Ju man reigns supreme. Round the king stood rows of native warriors, naked with the exception of a narrow strip of cloth round the loins, while the whole of the square was filled by an excited crowd of men and women, equally scantily attired, singing and dancing in groups round a crouching musician tapping the native skin drum, firing their long flintlock guns in the air, or reeling about hopelessly intoxicated with palm wine. Two stalwart slaves held a large umbrella, the symbol of authority, over the chief's head, while on either side stood a Ju Ju man to act as counsellor, as the chief dismissed one after another the trembling prisoners who awaited his sentence. Lying on the ground bound hand and foot with palm fibre were two men evidently of a different tribe, entirely naked, their black skins shining as the perspiration beads rose upon them, for they were purposely placed in the fierce glare of the sun, and smudged the stripes of white clay with which they were daubed.

When the last criminal was led trembling away, the two Ju Ju priests advanced towards a fire of scented wood, round which lay a number of brass vessels; and as the chief raised his hand a bloodthirsty roar broke from the excited crowd, while the guards dragged forward the white-painted victims, and loosening their bands, placed one on either side of the fire. A huge naked negro with a necklace of bones now advanced, a heavy straight sword in his hand, while the priests threw armfuls of an aromatic wood on the fire, so that the whole square was filled with the odour. The executioner stepped forward and swung his sword round his head, while a fresh howl like that of a pack of hungry wolves burst from the crowd, when the chief rose to his feet and ordered him to desist.

Towards the outside of the square the crowd were shouting, pushing, and struggling, and a few moments later fell away left and right,

while down the clear passage came Captain Wayne at the head of ten Haussas with fixed bayonets. His Karki uniform was torn and plastered with mud, and the captain between weakness and fever could scarcely stand erect. But keeping himself in hand by a desperate effort he walked up to the two shivering wretches and laid his hand on the shoulder of the nearest; then turning to the chief, he said in his own tongue: 'I demand these men, in the name of the White Queen.'

There was a roar of fury from the crowd, while the chief, waving his hand for silence, said: 'I wish you no harm, go in peace, for I desire no war with the White Queen; but it is not good to meddle with the gods of the Shantee. Wherefore go while you are safe, before my people tear you limb from limb.'

'Though we are but one white man and ten Haussas, yet for every one of us who die, we will kill ten of your people. Also the arm of the Queen is long, and afterwards the troops will come and burn your town and stamp it flat.'

As he spoke, the captain fixed his eyes on the chief's face, and the latter lowered his head and moved uneasily, then he whispered for a little with his Ju Ju priests. At length he lifted his hand and said: 'Your words are good; take the men and go in peace.'

At the head of his troopers the captain turned and faced the angry crowd, the prisoners, now unbound, standing between two files of Haussas. In front and on every side surged a furious mob shouting and shaking their barbed spears and flintlock guns.

'Fix bayonets, Haussas—march!' called the captain, as he drew his revolver, and the angry negroes fell away on either side before the line of glistening steel and the calm unmoved man. So they passed slowly and deliberately through the village, while the natives howled and shook their spears and guns, none daring to strike the first blow.

The captain's heart thumped, and his breath came in quick gasps through his parched mouth and throat, for he knew that the slightest accident would provoke a bloody encounter, in which every man of the little party would be wiped out, after which the colony would have to undertake a little expedition in punishment, that would cost much money and blood. However, coolness and courage won the day, and they reached the last hut scathless. Here the crowd swept upon them with a rush, but stopped when the bright steel held by the unmoved Haussas lay within an inch of their naked breasts, and one savage, stooping under the line of the bayonets, drove a light spear into the captain's leg. Instantly the latter raised his revolver and moved his arm until the bead of the foresight rested on the centre of the black forehead. Another instant and a fierce fight and the subsequent annihilation of the party would have followed, but the self-control of the officer was equal to the occasion. He lowered the revolver, and stooping down, broke off the haft of the slender spear; then he called out: 'I will come again with more soldiers for that man; Haussas—advance.'

The troopers took a step forward, and as the bayonets pricked their flesh, the crowd opened up on either side and the little band marched out of the village.

With clenched teeth the captain held his place until they were out of sight among the trees, then the reaction from the strain set in, and weak and broken down with fever and the pain of his wound he pitched forward head foremost into a clump of the fragrant African lilies. How he regained the station he never knew, but the faithful Haussas, who would follow an officer they admire down into Hades if he bade them, after much difficulty at last carried him into his room, where he lay for many hours in a troubled sleep.

Awakening, he found himself burning with fever, in a room which had the temperature of an oven, while through the open window little draughts of air like the breath of a furnace played in and out.

Calling Sergeant Akoo, who had faithfully watched every moment while he slept, to raise him, he passed his hand down his wounded thigh till his fingers touched the iron head of the spear. Now there are many kinds of West African spears; a few carry a merciful leaf-shaped head, but many have points covered with cruel barbs and hooks, so that once in the flesh it is impossible to pluck them out. The one that lay cankering in the captain's leg was of a curiously devilish kind, fashioned like a double corkscrew, and, driven in with a twist, could not be drawn out.

'Akoo,' said the captain, 'bring in two privates to hold my hands—and my big hunting-knife.'

When they came, he neither groaned nor lost consciousness till the ghastly operation was over, then his head dropped forward and he swooned away, while his trusty followers stopped the flow of blood. 'By the beard of the prophet,' said Sergeant Akoo, in the vernacular, 'but that is a man.'

Next morning the captain sent a trooper a hundred miles through the forest to ask that a relief might be sent, then he lay day after day in a canvas chair on the veranda, alternately shivering and burning with fever, and unable to move on account of his injured leg, which obstinately refused to heal. One weary week succeeded another, while the captain watched the white mists roll away at dawn, and the sun rise and shine all day with a pitiless heat out of a cloudless sky. The same panorama of solemn forest and glistening river stretched itself before his weary eyes, until his heart was as sick as his fevered body, and he feared his brain would give way. Meanwhile, Sergeant Akoo, who could neither read nor write, patrolled the country, and ruled as supreme monarch many thousands of natives; but the messenger never returned. Then one day a bushman came in by night with a letter from the nearest Government station to say that a wounded Hausa with a handful of cast-iron potleg shot into his body had one day dragged himself to the compound, and after holding out a letter, turned over and died; faithful unto death, for this is the

nature of the Mohammedan soldier. The message had been forwarded to headquarters, and the reply now reached the captain.

Calling a trooper to move his pillows and raise him, he broke the seal and read that no relief could be sent for some time, as there was no officer available, but that he had full authority to abandon the post for the time being, if his health necessitated such a course.

Now the captain was a simple man, not given to any heroics, but he had lived so long away from white men, that he had no thought left but the well-being of his district; so he said, for these dwellers in lonely wilds soon learn to think aloud: 'It is a temptation. If I stay here I shall go out before the rains, and if I go, there will be war, gorgeous war, between two or three of the chiefs, and the Government will send up an expedition and the district will be broken up for ever. No—I must stay and keep them in order—and face the fever and mortification. The event is with Allah, as Akoo says.'

He despatched another messenger, begging that an officer from a peaceable district should be sent, as the post could not be left. Then the weary waiting commenced again, and the dreary stifling days had to be faced somehow, with heat and fever, constant suffering from the wound and the dreadful loneliness. Still the captain held on, giving the sergeant fresh orders every morning, and listening to his reports of the day's work in the evening, while he daily grew thinner and more haggard; a miserable handful of bones and feeble flickering life, doing his small share in upholding the supremacy of our great empire.

But no reply arrived from headquarters, and at length Sergeant Akoo paused one morning before he called out his men and said: 'No book (letter) come, sah, bush man chop Hausa and 'teal him letter, but captain send more book and all Hausa fit to go.'

'No,' said the captain, 'I can't have my men cut off one by one, neither can I purchase relief with the death of my troopers. Did not King David say something of the kind about the water from the well of Bethlehem, which is beside the gate—the price of brave men's blood?'

Then he worried and tried experiments to see if his brain was losing its power, while the black sergeant and his troopers represented Her Majesty's Government and maintained the Queen's peace on the frontier.

By-and-by the rains came, and the captain's couch had to be moved inside; for the whole air was filled with the falling water, the rivers overflowed and every swamp was turned into a lake, while the house was filled with a steam that reeked of fever and dysentery. So the commissioner lay through the weary weeks listening to the constant roar of water on the roof, and the murmur of the flooded river, growing weaker and weaker, yet fighting a grim fight against despair and insanity.

At last the long-expected relief arrived, and the incoming officer found a ghastly, fever-worn skeleton that gazed at him with glittering eyes and whispered in a hoarse voice: 'Thank God!

—I've kept the station,' then collapsed, and lay speechless and silent, a wreck of what had once been a man.

Next morning, under command of Sergeant Akoo, eight bearers left the station carrying Captain Wayne in a hammock, and for fourteen days they stumbled along, through great forests of cotton-wood and mahogany trees, wading among dismal swamps, paddling across broad lagoons and down solitary river reaches. Now they journeyed all day by canoe through strange tunnel-like waterways, among the mangrove trees, then by dry land through patches of plumed swamp grass that met above their heads, or through forest glades where the ground lay carpeted by the fragrant African lily.

But the gaunt figure in the hammock saw none of these things, and the glittering eyes only opened when Sergeant Akoo raised the sufferer's head, and poured a few spoonfuls of food or drops of brandy down his throat.

Sixteen days after the captain left the station, three men sat in the long bare room of a trader's house, built on high piles, looking out over the sea at Axim.

The windows were wide open, and through them you could see, beneath the arches of the palm branches, the boundless stretch of the Atlantic, and a long yellow beach where the great blue rollers broke in sheets of snowy foam; while the roar of the surf, and the smell of flowers, burning wood, rotting leaves and mud, which is the breath of the Dark Continent, came in with every passing puff of hot air.

Lying on a canvas couch under the window was the wasted figure of Captain Wayne, who opened his eyes as the doctor leaned over him and smiled as he murmured: 'You are very kind—yes, I'm better already—and I'm going home to-morrow—don't forget to signal for the steamer to call.'

'Then lie down and keep quiet,' said the doctor. 'We'll signal for the steamer'—here he leaned over and called out to the krooboy. 'Hoist the steamer flag, Frypan, and fire gun when steamer live,' then withdrew to a corner, and the three men talked in whispers.

'Has he any chance, doctor?' said the trader.

'He cannot live till they reach Sa Leone, and may die before the steamer arrives here. Think of what the man has gone through; enough to kill ten like me.'

Here they laughed softly, for the doctor had for years waged a grim fight with fever and dysentery, cholera and guinea-worm, to say nothing of pot-shots from Shantees on the frontier.

'Poor fellow,' said the trader, 'he did his best.—Tom, it's Sunday afternoon; see if you can get a tune out of the piano, if it's not rusted to bits and the krooboy's haven't stolen the wire.'

The third person rose and sitting down to the broken-down instrument struck a few low chords, then after various snatches of topical songs which had reached the coast, began slowly an old-fashioned tune to the Magnificat. The doctor and his companion at first laughed; church music was new on the coast, but as the player, gaining confidence in the instrument,

drew out the solemn music, the smile died away and they took off their hats. Chord after chord the sweet old tune rang out, while the thoughts of the listeners passed over leagues of ocean, and they saw again the sweet English meadows, or purple Scottish moor, with its glory of gorse and heather.

The deep thunder of the surf seemed not a disturbing element but a fitting accompaniment, and as the crimson light of the westing sun shone upon his face, the sick man beckoned the faithful sergeant to raise him on his couch. So he lay, gazing westward, with the light bringing a ruddy glow to the ghastly cheeks, listening, while a tear trickled slowly out of the sunken eyes.

Was he thinking of the distant country he had served so faithfully, and loved so well? No one ever knew, for as the last chord of the 'Amen' died away, the tired head drooped forward and he turned to the wall, and so passed away.

To where beyond these voices there is peace.

Then a deep silence fell upon the room, and Sergeant Akoo bent down and drew the sheet over the pallid face, saying as he did so, 'Allah Akbar—God is great—but, by the beard of the prophet, these English be men.' Two days later, when the R.M.S. *Bengala* passed, there was no signal flying for her to stop, and only a low mound and a rough wooden cross showed that another of the brave spirits who daily lay down their lives in lonely forest and fever-haunted swamp had gone to its own place.

A SONG IN EXILE.

MINE no more! . . . For other eyes
All thy beauties now are spread,
All the rapture of thy skies
When the winds laugh overhead,
All the boundless moorland ways
Purple with the heather bloom,
Dusky woods, and hills a-daze
With the glow of yellow broom.
Careless feet will come and go,
Only I that loved thee so,
Wander on an alien shore—
Oh, my country, mine no more!
Mine no more!

Still I see in haunting dreams
Loch and glen and valley fair,
Hear the roar of mountain streams,
Feel the rush of moorland air;
Every northern wind that blows,
To my heart some message brings;
Every bird that northward goes
Bears my greeting on its wings.
Happy winds and wild birds free!
Would that I, like you, could flee
To that land beloved of yore—
Oh, my country, mine no more!
Mine no more!

MARY MACLEOD.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 635.—VOL. XIII. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

THAMES WATERMEN.

AT one time—now a century or more ago—the Thames was recognised as the only great London thoroughfare. Its banks on either side were studded with the 'stairs' of the nobility; its waters were covered with every kind of craft, from the gilded barge of royalty to the nutshell skiff or wherry. In those days the river was pure and undefiled; and those who lived upon its banks never hesitated to bathe there in balmy weather. In those days there was no spot in London so picturesque as the Strand, with its broad gardens, its shady trees extending to the water's edge, where 'the river glideth at its own sweet will,' and where the embattled turrets of many a palace, such as the Savoy, towered artistically in the background. Flocks of swans sailed to and fro in spite of the traffic: they ventured unmolested even below bridge; and the sight of them and their quaint 'song' must have been vastly agreeable to the Thames watermen and their fares. 'Pray, did you come with oars or scullers?' was an every-day question. Citizens spoke of 'taking the water' very much as we now speak of taking an omnibus or cab. The watermen's fares were regulated by the company's printed scale of charges; the Hall of the Watermen's Company, where all their business was transacted, being then situated at Coldharbour, near the Vintry. Some forty thousand watermen were upon the rolls of the company, those of the King's Court and the nobility being no doubt included in this number; and the company was in a position to furnish the navy with as many as twenty thousand men.

The aquatic sports, still to be seen among the boatmen of the Seine and of the Rhine, were once the delight of the London watermen during their Easter holidays. One famous sport consisted in two wherries, each rowed by a couple of watermen, running against each other with staves in hand—a recreation much in vogue among the gondoliers of Venice. An-

other sport among the watermen was to hang a shield on a pole in mid-stream; while in a boat without oars stood a waterman, lance in hand, ready to charge at the shield when carried swiftly towards it by the force of the tide. If he broke his lance against the shield without going overboard, he was thought to have performed a valiant deed. But it more frequently happened that he went head over heels into the water. He was instantly recovered, however, by 'watermen in waiting,' amidst the derisive shouts of the crowd upon London Bridge, on the wharfs, and from the houses and grounds by the river-side.

Then there came in later days the sport of winning Doggett's far-famed prize. It is rowed for—and has been for nearly two hundred years—by six young watermen, whose apprenticeship has expired the year before. To have endowed the river with an annual coat and silver badge was a brilliant thought on the part of the actor. It has helped to keep up the famous traditions of the old Thames watermen: and besides, did it not inspire Dibdin to create his immortal 'Tom Tug?'

And did you ne'er hear of a jolly young waterman,

Who at Blackfriars Bridge used for to ply?

He feathered his oars with such skill and dexterity,

Winning each heart and delighting each eye.

In his despair, however, of winning Wilhelmina, he resolves at last to give up the life of a waterman and take himself off to sea:

Then, farewell, my trim-built wherry,

Oars and coat, and badge, farewell!

Never more at Chelsea ferry

Shall your Thomas take a spell.

But Tom changes his mind, and determines to row for the coat and badge, after all, in order to win his love if possible by winning the prize. Wilhelmina watches the race from the Swan Inn, Chelsea, and applauds the winner before she discovers him to be her persistent suitor, Thomas. A blush was her 'answer to

his wooing tale;' and so it all ended happily. This old Swan Inn was swept away some twenty years ago to make room for the Thames Embankment; and the coat and badge is now rowed for from Cadogan Pier to Chelsea. It is worthy of note that Garrick selected *The Waterman* to follow the comedy of *The Wonder* on the night of his last appearance on the stage, so popular was the character of Tom Tug at that time.

It is interesting to glance for a moment at the watermen's table of charges before the days of the penny steamboats. A 'fare' could then be carried 'with oars' for a shilling from London Bridge to Limehouse, or Shadwell. Eightpence was the charge from the Temple Stairs, or Blackfriars, to Lambeth: while sixpence would frank a fare from London Bridge or Tooley Street, on the opposite side of the river, to 'Wapping Old Stairs.' The cost for being ferried 'over the water' at any Stairs between Vauxhall and Limehouse was fourpence. For longer journeys the rates were proportionately higher. For instance, to Gravesend the fare was four and sixpence; to Windsor it was fourteen shillings. These latter places were the extreme limits denoted in the watermen's printed tables.

They were a rough, saucy, and independent class, these old Thames watermen. One is constrained to draw this conclusion from the constant allusions to them in old comedies and popular songs of the last century. They were notorious for their water dialect or mob language: they accosted each other as they rowed by in the most abusive language they could invent. But at the same time it is only fair to record, they put as much satirical humour into their repartee as they were capable of. Their questionable phraseology led to innumerable complaints. Fielding speaks quite touchingly about it in his *Voyage to Lisbon*; while Sir Roger de Coverley expresses in the *Spectator* his sense of repugnance at the language with which he was assailed while taking boat on the Thames; and so it came about at last that, by order of the Watermen's Company, this extemporaneous 'satire' was prohibited. Any waterman or apprentice convicted of using bad language was fined half-a-crown for each offence.

They had an ear for music, though, these uncouth 'hearts of oak,' and kept time with their oars to many a lively ditty. Their songs were less sentimental, of course, than those of the gondolier; there was a manly ring in them—something of the brine and the breeze, to which these men of the Thames had a certain kinship. The famous river song, 'Row the Boat, Norman,' was sung on the Thames for many a year. Its origin can be told in two words. Before Sir John Norman was elected in 1453 Lord Mayor of London, it was usual for the chief magistrate and his train to go to Westminster Hall on horseback. But he, to the watermen's unbounded delight, elected to go there by river; and he accordingly built a magnificent barge to be used during his mayoralty. The officials connected with this water-pagant included the water-bailiff, one of his lordship's esquires, a shallop and eight men; and in the suite were a barge-master and thirty-

two city watermen. The City companies followed Norman's example, and constructed gilded barges to accompany their mayors. The watermen still take part in the Lord Mayor's show: the trumpeters who formerly heralded, from the prow of his barge, his lordship's approach to Westminster, now precede on foot, in all civic State ceremonies, his lordship's State carriage.

Although the river was so great a thoroughfare in the old days, it was by no means safe at all places and at all seasons. Loss of life was not an infrequent occurrence while accomplishing the feat of passing under Old London Bridge, owing to the narrowness of the arches. There was no embankment of any note; and the river was therefore broader in many parts than in the present day, and ferrying across was not always an easy matter. It was all very well in summer-time for watermen to row their fares, with the tide in their favour, under the 'chequered shades of Millbank willows.' But on rough, wintry nights it was as risky to ferry across the river as it is to cross from Dover to Calais in a steamer of the present day. Indeed, before the building of Westminster Bridge, the only communication between Westminster and Lambeth was by ferry-boat; and there were two considerable inns for the reception of travellers who, arriving after dark, dreaded to take the water in the face of a high wind or strong tide.

The most conspicuous among the old Thames watermen was John Taylor, the Water-poet. He literally gained his livelihood by plying on the river. The 'gentlemanlike sculler,' as a contemporary dubbed him, lived in a poetical atmosphere; for he plied off Bankside, within sight of the Globe Theatre; and doubtless he ferried Shakespeare—for he lived in his time—from Paris Garden to Whitehall more than once. This Water-poet had taken up his position in a spot where there were plenty of fares, which showed him to be possessed of an eye to the main chance; for Bankside was the landing-place to which citizens thronged in those days of Shakespearean glory. Besides, there were other places of amusement on the Bank side—the Rose and the Hope playhouses. With no bridge except Old London Bridge, and with Southwark, the chosen ground of summer theatres and 'bear-houses,' there is little wonder that John Taylor sang the praises of the river with all his heart and soul:

But noble Thames, whilst I can hold a pen,
I will divulge thy glory unto men:
Thou in the morning, when my coin is scant,
Before the evening doth supply my want.

But at last the halcyon days of the Thames watermen came to an end. The nobility following in the footsteps of royalty, laid aside their gilded barges. Even the busy Inns of Court, whose practitioners and students had hitherto patronised the river for business and pleasure alike, took to the hackney-coach. The streets, as Taylor tells us,

Are choked outright,
Where men can hardly pass, from morn till night,
Whilst watermen want work.

The Water-poet then drops into prose, and goes forth to attack the coaches with great

vehemence: he maintains that their swarm of 'trade-spillers'—as he styles them—have so overrun the land that there is no getting a living upon the water.

It must indeed have been a terrible blow, this irruption of coaches, for John Taylor and his fraternity; as terrible as the railway to the postmaster and postillion of a later age. But Taylor never lost heart, though coaches at last drove him off the river. He rented a tavern in Long Acre at the sign of the Poet's Head; and he supplied his own portrait with the following inscription:

There's many a head stands for a sign,
Then, gentle Reader, why not mine?

Here, at the Poet's Head, he died in 1645, and was buried in the watermen's churchyard. This burial-ground stood on the south side of St Martin's-in-the-Field; and watermen were as ambitious to be placed here when they died, as any naval hero for a tomb in St Paul's.

The Thames, no longer the great highway, now became little more than a water conveyance, in the absence of bridges, between the City and the Borough. The Watermen's Company opposed the building of Westminster and Blackfriars Bridges as long as they could; but they were compelled to yield at last. And now even the ferrymen ceased to linger at the different Stairs, looking out hungrily for a chance 'fare.' It was a thing of the past. 'Boat, your honour! boat! boat!' was heard no more.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

CHAPTER VII.—THE CHURCHYARD.

I PASS over as irrelevant, or at least superfluous, the very disagreeable interview in which I revealed my plans to Frances. She had found a new opening for me—I was to be appointed Commissioner for Tobago, or President of Turk's Island, or Lieutenant-governor of the Gold Coast: she could obtain the post for me: it was an excellent opening: I was to spend two or three years in the endeavour to escape fever, and five or six years of sick leave at intervals. I should then have a clear claim to the gratitude of the Colonial Office and should be appointed Governor of some colony with a salary of many thousands. What more could any man desire?

Nothing, truly. And, as Frances observed, no creeping: no wriggling: no backstairs: also there is no examination for these appointments. And they are obtained in the good old way, by interest alone.

Why not, then, accept? Because, unfortunately, I was now a craftsman, and I really desired no other kind of life.

It was then that Frances spoke with conviction of demoniac possession—I never before thought she believed in it—and of the extreme madness which sometimes seizes on men; and of the follies unspeakable which they commit. She was very angry—very angry indeed. She also declared her disgustful surprise at the bad, low, grovelling taste which made it possible for me to

leave the ranks of gentilehood, and to go down—down—down—to live among beery, tobacco-smoking, ill-bred, uncultivated boors and bourgeois. She displayed on this subject quite an unexpected flow of language and command of adjectives. To be sure I had never seen her in a real rage before. And she looked very handsome indeed, marching about the room with flushed cheeks and angry eyes while she declaimed and denounced and lamented. I never admired her so much. She became so unexpected that I very nearly fell in love with her.

When she had quite finished by throwing such words as 'insensate,' 'clod,' and 'stock and stone' at my head, and by saying that she had now done with me for ever: and when she had flung herself into a chair and held her handkerchief to her eyes—I had never seen her cry before—and—indeed it was so unexpected that I very nearly, as I said before—and when I had said a few brotherly words and uttered a few assurances: and when we had shaken hands again—I kissed her hand if I remember aright—we sat down opposite to each other and close together, and had a pleasant talk quite in the old style, though it was understood that I was henceforth only a plain boat-builder.

It was then that I told her first about my cousin. She listened without much interest. The man was a mere tradesman.

'You want a recruit, Frances, for the Party? Of course you do. Well, then, I tell you that you could not do better than look after this man.'

'A man's a man, of course. Otherwise, George, the working-men members do not always turn out worth much. Still there are one or two—and—well—tell me more about this man.'

'He is not exactly a working-man. He is a master craftsman.'

'Oh!' She shrugged her shoulders impatiently. Such distinctions she knew not. And then I told her about his attainments and his boundless ambitions and everything, till at last I succeeded in making her believe that here really was a man who might be worth considering—the only fault which Frances then possessed was that she underrated the powers of everybody outside a certain circle. I told her about Robert at first, I believe, in order to divert her mind from the distressing spectacle of my decline and fall, and next in order to show her that we were not all beery boors and bourgeois at Wapping-on-the-Wall, and, lastly, it came into my head that if she should per-adventure take an interest in his parliamentary career it might be very useful to him.

After a bit she began to understand a little. Her imagination was at last fired by the picture of this young man resolving, while yet a boy, on entering the House of Commons, and learning to speak at a sham Parliament, working at home on history, politics, social economy, all the questions of the day, reading Mill, Herbert, Spencer, Darwin, Huxley, Lecky, Froude, Freeman, Green, Seeley, and all the rest of them, becoming a learned man, denying himself the joys of youth, all for the sake of his ambition; and all the time remaining strong and masterful as one born to command. Because I am a dull person in narrative, or because

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she was prejudiced generally against trade, it was a long time before I succeeded in awakening her interest in the man. 'Do you know,' she said at last, 'that you seem to have got a very remarkable creature down there! Of course I cannot really believe that he will really come to anything. A man living all by himself, and ignorant of all the world outside his trade, cannot come to any good. In the House one must know men, not books only.'

'I wonder if you would like to hear him speak? He speaks every Sunday evening. If you like we will go.'

So it was arranged. Frances would like to see the kind of people who formed that constituency: she would like to hear the kind of speech that pleased them: she would go, subject to one condition, that she was not to see the boat-yard. 'I could not, George,' she said. 'It is bad enough that you should descend into that horrid place—when you might become Colonial Governor. I could not actually see the chips and shavings. Oh! George, you are very willful—but I must always forgive you. Yes, I will go with you to see this wonderful person of Wapping. You only try to excuse your abominable alacrity in sinking by pretending that you have got a Prophet down there.'

So I came away forgiven and reconciled, but for ever fallen in her esteem, and I returned to my river-side work with greater heart now that the worst was over.

It was natural that one should take an interest in the people of the place—especially in the people of the house. I spent every day an hour—the dinner hour—with Robert's household. Sometimes, too, another half-hour over a cup of tea. Therefore, of course, one thought a good deal about the people. The captain I found an honest, hearty old fellow who liked his meals, took a cheerful glass after his dinner and supper, and slept away most of the remaining time. He had a room at the back called the captain's cabin, where there was a narrow bed and an easy-chair; a hob with a kettle; a table with a tobacco-jar, and other conveniences. There I sometimes visited him and heard experiences.

But the person of real interest was Isabel. I thought her, at first, inanimate and perhaps stupid. I discovered first, that she had a very beautiful head—the poets do not seem to understand the charm of a well-shaped head—but it was nearly always drooping. Then I observed that her hair was quite wonderful—there was such a lot of it, and it was of such a lovely light colour, looking as if it held the sunshine even in that dark 'parlour'—it was, however, only rolled up without any coquettish display—was the girl quite ignorant of her charms? Her eyes were generally down, dropped as in shyness or humility—once she lifted them with some strange wonder because I made some frivolous remark—there was never any frivolity about this house before I went into it; why, they were large and limpid, of a deep blue, like the dark blue of a pansy. And then I discovered that her features were straight and regular, and that though her cheek was pale, and her manner was listless and drooping, the girl was full of beauty in face and head and figure. And Robert, like a thing of wood, had

no eyes for the loveliness that was his by engagement! Wonderful!

I could not, at first, get the girl to talk to me. She sat at table, carving in silence, or pouring out the tea in silence. When it was over, she spread out her books and began to work again. And week after week passed by; I was an old shipmate with the captain; I was on the most confidential terms, as you have seen, with Robert. But Isabel remained a stranger.

Then the opportunity came.

It was a Saturday afternoon. I had been spending an hour after dinner talking with the captain in his den. Then, as he showed signs of going to sleep, I left him, and bent my steps westward. It was a bright, sunny afternoon in May. The street was deserted; the warehouses were shut up; the sunshine increased, and set off, the dreariness of the tall places on either side.

I came to the mouth of the dock. As once before, the gates were open for the passing of a ship, and I had to wait. I leaned against the rail and watched. On the right was the dock, with the masts of the ships; on the left was the river. I looked at the river and looked at the dock. Then I became aware of a most unexpected fact—on the right hand, besides the dock, there were trees—green trees! 'Anything green in Wapping?' I asked. 'Trees and green leaves. Do they grow out of the water?'

I then perceived that there was a street leading north—I thought that there was nothing north of the High Street except the dock.

At the corner was a substantial modern house, the vestry house of the parish, with its brass plate and clean windows. Next, I observed a lovely eighteenth-century house—sober, square, built of red brick, having an ample portal, and in the wall two effigies of boy and girl. This was the parish school. The figures looked more demure than one could believe possible in human boy and human girl. And then I came to the church, a plain and unaffected preaching house of brick, with pillars and portico of stone; beside it on the south side was a narrow churchyard, adorned with old tombstones, headstones and altar stones, the sepulchres of bygone captains, past owners, sailors, and boat-builders. I observed with some pride the name of Burnikel on one of them, the nearest to the street—my ancestor. Perhaps all the important tombs belonged to Burnikels, if I could only climb over the rails to see. The church was shut, yet it might have been more useful in the week when Wapping is full than on the Sunday when Wapping is empty. Had it been open, I might have gratified my family pride still more by observing the tablets and reading of the incomparable virtues of other Burnikels belonging to this fine old stock. There was part of the churchyard on the north side; its houses had been recently cleared away and the space turned into a recreation ground. So liberal was the County Council that they swept away half the remnant of Wapping that had been spared by the docks, and now there are not enough people left in the town to populate the recreation ground. Children were recreating in it, however, and there was a gymnasium for

them in one corner, and a stand for the summer band in another corner. A picturesque row of 'backs' showed the character of the streets that had been cleared away.

I noted these things. I observed also that there were still remaining, beyond the recreation ground, other streets of small houses—not beautiful, not clean, perhaps squalid, if one were inclined to harshness—and beyond these streets tall masts which told of another dock. Wapping, then, did not, as I had fondly imagined, consist of one street only with a river on one side and docks on the other, and no living person in it at night except the Burnikels. Wapping is a collection of human beings; it is a hamlet, a township, a town complete.

Here was the parish church, here were the endowed schools, here was the vestry hall, here was the playground. I turned back, and then—a thing which I had passed over before—I perceived before me, fenced round, a peaceful, beautiful burying-ground, lying opposite the parish church on the other side of the road. A more peaceful spot one would not expect in the most secluded village. It was filled with tombs and headstones; it was planted with a thick coppice of limes, lilacs, laburnums, and all kinds of flowering trees and shrubs growing among the tombs. I looked through the bars. Wapping, then, had this one garden left, and since the greater part of Wapping was dead and gone, buried deep below the docks, a churchyard seemed the fittest place in which to maintain a garden. Wherever industries spread, and trade increases, we find the past beside the present. In the midst of the noise and hurry of Manchester there stands the ancient college; in the midst of Hull rises the ancient church; in the midst of the smoke and grime of Newcastle there is its ancient fortress; and beside the modern docks of Wapping stands the old church with its burying-ground and its schools. Let me never live where there is nothing ancient, nothing to connect me with my forefathers, nothing to remind me of death, nothing to preach to me on the continuous life in which the living are but links, and the past is neither lost nor forgotten.

The gate was unlocked. I gently pushed it open and stepped within, reverently, yet with the sense of ownership. Why not? Before me stood a headstone—the name had been recently cleaned and restored—'Sacred to the memory of John Burnikel, Master Mariner, died March 16, 1808, aged ninety-four years.' That must have been the man with the diamonds. I stooped down and pushed aside the grass to read the text with which his pious cousins had decorated the tomb. 'Of whom the world was not worthy' I read. Astonishing! Of whom the world was not worthy! This must have been written while they still expected to find the diamonds. Then I plunged, so to speak, into the recesses of this coppice. And there I found, to my amazement, sitting on a tomb with folded hands, and hanging head, in an attitude of the most profound dejection, the girl Isabel.

She lifted her head when she heard my step. She had been crying; the tears, like dewdrops, lay still upon her cheeks.

'You here, Isabel?' I cried. 'What are you doing in the place of tombs?'

'I am sitting here.' But she rose as if she was tired of sitting there and should now go home.

'Yes, I see. But'—

'It is a pretty place. There are not too many pretty places in Wapping.'

'No. Do you often come here?'

'In spring and summer, sometimes, when I can get away. On Saturday afternoons. It is quiet. Nobody else ever comes. I have it all to myself.'

'Why are you crying, Isabel? Don't cry. It makes me miserable to see a girl crying. Are you unhappy?'

She turned away her head and made no reply.

'Sit down again where you were, Isabel. It is a pretty place. The lilacs are bursting into blossom and the laburnums are beginning. It is a very pretty place. The dead sleep well and the living you do not see. Can you tell me, Isabel, why you are unhappy?'

She shook her head, but she obeyed in sitting down again.

'Of course I have seen all along that you are not happy. You work too hard for one thing. Is it the work?'

'Oh no!—no!—no! I must do what Robert tells me to do.'

'You are too much confined to the house. Is it the want of change?'

'No, no. I want no change. I do what I have to do.'

'You will not tell me.'

'I cannot.'

'Of course I have no right to ask. Still, I am Robert's cousin, and I see you every day, and you can't wonder if I take an interest in you. Will you be offended if I speak just a little of my mind?'

'I offended? Does that matter?' A strange thing for a girl to say, as if she was of no importance at all; as if surprised that any one should regard her at all.

'Well, Isabel, in that part of the world where I have chiefly lived the girls are treated with consideration: they are princesses: they are filled with the consciousness of their own power: their words are received with respect and their wishes are studied. It matters very much indeed whether one offends them or not. So I hope not to offend your ladyship.'

'You will not offend me.'

'Well, then. Listen. You work too hard; you get no society; you have no change; you take too little exercise; you are growing nervous and shy; you shirk from seeing people.'

'I live the life that is assigned to me.'

'You are so young, Isabel, that you ought to sing in the house; you ought to walk as if you had wings; you ought to laugh all day; you ought to rebel and revolt and mutiny'—

She did laugh, but not with merriment.

'All these things belong to your age and your sex and—your beauty.'

'My beauty!' she repeated, with a kind of wonder. 'My beauty! Oh no! You must not talk nonsense.'

'Your beauty. You should be a very beauti-

ful girl if the cloud would lift. Come now. May I lift that cloud for you? May I try, at least?

I held out my hand. She hesitated a moment. Then she gave me her own timidly.

I did not suspect the real cause of her unhappiness. I did, however, feel a most profound pity for a young girl who could find no better amusement than to sit among the tombs on a fine afternoon in spring. Even those who are nearing the time when they will be put to lie there do not generally like to sit among them.

'You will tell me some other time,' I said, 'why you are so sad. Meantime, let me be your friend; and, look here, Isabel, I am a great physician. You must believe that I have cured countless cases of Languishing Lady and Doleful Damsel. I am thousands of years old, although I am apparently only five-and-twenty; that is because I am such a great physician.' Well, at this nonsense she actually smiled. 'And now, I will prescribe for you. Not so much work; not so much house; not so much monotony.'

'The work has to be done.'

'Robert is so busy himself that he does not observe. I shall speak to him.'

'Oh! But what he says'—

'Yes, yes, I know. I will speak to him. Now, come with me. I will take you out upon the river. That will do you more good than sitting among the tombs—even the tombs of the Burnikels.'

There are still boats and 'first oars' at Wapping Old Stairs. In five minutes I was sitting beside her in the stern of a wherry—Burnikel built—with a couple of stout fellows pulling us down stream. And I brought her back with colour in her cheeks and brightness in her eyes. 'My medicine works already,' I said. 'Robert will say that I have done wonders.'

Alas! Robert observed no change at all; and during the half-hour of tea the poor girl sat as usual with hanging head and down-dropped eyes. But it was a beginning.

(To be continued.)

TRANSVAAL PRISONS FROM THE INSIDE.

WHEN knocking about South Africa lately, in a wild mood, heart three-quarters broken, I had occasion to use a couple of times Paul Kruger's prison-houses of detention as hotels, and this is what I saw and thought. Anyhow, come, please, with me kindly to Johannesburg jail, the largest and most important in Africa. It is an enormous solid mass of buildings of huge blocks of stone with iron roofing, and looks down on its own pet city from the most commanding of the hills around—namely, Hospital Hill. Rome's glory was reflected by her similarly situated capitol: and now, by a *fin de siècle* chance replica, the innate genius of Johannesburg is embodied in her palace-jail. For Johannesburgers, it is slyly hinted by those who have met

them in business or otherwise, are composed of three classes—namely, (1) those who have been in jail; (2) those who are now in; (3) those who still have to go there; but have been up to now fortunate enough to escape.

On entering the jail, you are—or are not, according to Boer caprice—supplied with its home necessities authorised by law. Anyhow you are entitled to a plate, mug, and spoon, all of tin, a towel, a bit of soap once a fortnight, and, if lucky, a tin bucket, which you can keep clean for drinking water; also three rugs for bed-clothes, and if your cell happens to have a stone floor, a straw mattress, if you can get one. Half a pound of mealie-meal, boiled to a 'pap,' served at daybreak, and ditto at night, and at mid-day one pound loaf of bread and one pound of rough meat, which can be exchanged for Transvaal tobacco with the Kaffir prisoners. Now you have a regular and simple life which will put that of any ordinary hydro-pathic to the blush, if only the patient can stand it.

Here comes S—, bright and whistling, an Austrian of thirty, vain of his good looks and earrings, who at Fiume stabbed a fellow-countryman to death in a row for badly beating his mate. Only the night before the execution should have taken place, he learnt that he was reprieved, and a life's imprisonment substituted. From seven years of age, when he ran away from his father to escape a thrashing, he wandered the world in independence; and after many coasting experiences in the Mediterranean, and long voyages to the Americas and England, at all of which places he was in a chronic state of deserting his ship, he found himself ashore at Capetown. Seal-hunting, diamond-digging, bar-keeping, mining, contracting for work on railways with gangs of blacks (who could in the earlier days be shot like dogs, buried in the railway-track, and no questions asked), he has now become the leading pillar in the jail Salvation Army meetings, where he reads the Bible in broken English, and leads in loud notes the hymns he has chosen, chorused to by all the Kaffir prisoners, who sing the tune only, and do not know the words. The stabbing affrays he has been mixed up in are too numerous to recall, but his forte is lying on his back on his bed, or in the sun, telling and inventing highly graphic and poetical children's stories to a knot of prisoners. He is doctor's orderly, giving out medicines and being held responsible for the cleanliness of the jail, whereby he escapes hard labour, and finds time to make and dispose of canvas water-bottles in exchange for tea, sugar, tobacco, and little luxuries. In the present unsettled state of politics he may be at large again soon, for no one knows when or on what system prisoners are released, or will be.

Henry S—, Dutch on the mother's side, but son of an English father, is a typical Dutch free-

booter. He is a trader, with ox-wagons and calicoes, boots, guns, &c., knowing the country—roads and routes—from Natal to Namaqualand; and has lost every trace of the Englishman, save a knowledge of the English language, and good animal courage, which, combined with Dutch cunning, has made him a formidable desperado. Wherever he went, cattle disappeared, and, as attendant Kaffirs died or disappeared as a rule very suddenly, and were replaced by others, none but himself knew exactly how his flocks and herds increased. Being paid by farmers and Kaffirs mainly in cattle, he formed centres at which to collect them, and made it worth while for smart natives to steal others. He was once surprised in the act of hanging one of his boys to a high projection of his wagon, but as he explained that he was only tying him up to prevent his running away, the Dutch police did not press the question further. A very powerful, thick-set, black-bearded man; he helped to steal hundreds of cattle—principally looted beasts belonging to the expedition—in the Malaboeh and kindred campaigns. He fought for England in the Zulu war, against her in the Boer war, and has been in nearly every South African affair of note, except the Matabele, fighting always with the irregulars, and from behind cover.

Here he is at last in jail for stealing a miserable cow only worth a pound or two; and his black boy, who stole it for him, and on whose evidence S— was convicted, lies in the same jail suffering for another offence. He now waits on his old master in jail, and will undoubtedly, poor fool, go back instinctively to him when released. The prison warders and Dutch police are S—'s best friends; he is not made to work, or only as much as he likes, and receives presents from the easy-going, rough, and ignorant officials, who look upon him as a safe rifle-shot, and a safe Dutchman.

We had Lord Randolph Churchill's cook—with him in his South African tour—in for stealing a bicycle. He told quaint stories of Lord Randolph's detestation of Dutch names and Dutch Boers. 'Oh Lord!' he gasped convulsively, when paying a formal call on a local landroest, as, on driving up, the huge unkempt head of the 'vrouw' was poked out of the front-door on the stoep, or cemented veranda, to know who wanted her Goodman, as she struggled into her typical old calico dress; and his lordship right-abouted his horses, returning to camp quicker than he came.

There sits in heavy irons a Belgian of middle age, and in figure best described as a block four feet six inches square, one of the most desperate robbers and jovial rascals in the country. He is ironed, as the Dutchmen cannot otherwise prevent his trying to escape, except by keeping him constantly locked up. His last escape was in full mounted-policeman's uniform and on horseback, with revolver drawn and cocked, right through the other prisoners and guards, and laughing at them. He had his things left for him by some friend near where the gang was marched to work, his horse tethered behind a hillock, obtained a

couple of minutes' excuse, changed his clothes, and was off: and was not recaptured till the next offence. Then he nearly shook the teeth out of his jailer, who had run up and shaken him first on hearing him demur at obeying some order of a warder. The prisoner's objection from the dock to his jailer's giving evidence of the assault on the ground that he was already a forsworn man, having broken the oath he took to Queen Victoria when he deserted to the Boers, was comically pathetic.

Then comes young —, the scion of a well-known gang of bushrangers, who some years ago stuck up several Australian banks. Young, handsome, with fair moustache, he is not allowed by the prison authorities to go out to work at all as they fear his escaping, and confine him to jail, frequently changing him from one jail to another. Twice, returning from his trial at the court-house, he was nearly off: once jumping out of a cab, wherein he sat handcuffed to a brother-offender, having opened the handcuffs with a piece of string; when just out-distancing the police he was upset by an officious civilian, and retaken. His pal stepped coolly from the cab, the police being in pursuit of Kelly, walked slowly through the crowd, and was never heard of more. Another time, in an organised stampede of the prisoners near the railway station, he escaped the police revolver bullets, and being too drunk to steer properly, tripped up over some loose wires and could not rise again before being retaken. He had entered the Standard Bank well dressed, with an accomplice carrying a bag an exact copy of one then lying on the bank counter, in which the balance due between that bank and another was carried across the street in gold, notes, &c., by a messenger on fixed dates. The time for closing was at hand, few were about, and the bank official was accosted by 'Hullo, Brown, my dear old fellow, how are you? &c. What? You don't know me? Impossible! &c. Why, we lodged together in the same rooms for six weeks in Port Elizabeth. If I don't know you, I don't know myself, &c.' The official is embarrassed, his attention distracted, mutual explanations and mutual regrets follow, the bags are exchanged, the valuable one has gone, and some time elapses before at the neighbouring bank the bag substituted for it is found to contain, not gold and notes, but bits of old lead, old iron, old newspapers. Some thousands were taken, some £900 were found on —, a curious question subsequently arising as to whether it belonged to the bank, or whether —'s counsel had a right to be paid out of it, he being, of course, employed previous to the conviction which proved to whom the money belonged.

— had commenced bribing the officials in jail before attempting to escape, and had cabs in his pay nightly waiting for him outside the jail. A good deal of money was smuggled through to him, including, I am sorry to say, a great many shillings gold-coated to pass as sovereigns. He was transferred to another jail for better security, but has, no doubt, ere now escaped.

A cell is usually occupied by four whites or twenty blacks, the latter reposing much like

sardines. Flogging, one can see, is necessary to keep Kaffirs in order, but, poor souls, such lashings as they at times get at the hands of the Dutch are simply hideous. Some Kaffirs, long-time men, told us through the bars separating 'white' from 'black' yards, that two had lately died after such flogging, and one recently operated on was believed to be dying whilst they were talking to us. The blacks are placed against a sort of leaning ladder, their arms stretched up, and their wrists and ankles firmly strapped. It is wonderful how callous one Kaffir is to another Kaffir's suffering. The doctor is bound to be present. He of Johannesburg has black blood in his veins. He got the post for services rendered in the Boer war against the English, as did the majority of those now in Transvaal Government pay.

That man is one of three who went up to a farmer who was driving a valuable lot of sheep, who had outspanned with his Kaffirs and was at dinner. They asked him for something, shot him first, then shot his Kaffirs, threw the bodies into a disused mine-shaft, burnt the wagon and drove off the oxen and sheep. Some casual traveller stumbling on the shaft, the murders stood revealed, and an attempt to dispose of some of the sheep on which a distinctive brand had not been properly obliterated, led to the arrest and conviction of two of them. A very clever defence placed the chief guilt on the third, who escaped.

The couple of burglars talking yonder are 'in' for a quick job. When they had got entrance through the window of a jeweller's shop from the street, a charge of dynamite had been poked in through the keyhole of the safe, the fuse was exploded, the front-door of the safe blown out, and all its contents, watches, chains, stones, rings, &c. swept anyhow into a couple of large bags; and they were off before any who heard the noise had recovered from the shock, or had presence of mind to appear upon the scene. They were afterwards split upon by a pawn-broker, and convicted. The jailer at Klerksdorp is a tiny Dutchman of Portuguese extraction, and small and fat as Portuguese are generally made. He looked very funny when I first saw him, ordering his motley myrmidons to put a huge English soldier-deserter into the stocks for laughing at and not saluting him. I do not think they ever got the 'ryneck' there, for they were falling thick as autumn leaves when I last looked back. 'Ryneck,' or 'red neck,' with adjective prefixed, is the Dutchman's epithet for the Englishman, since he saw the red-coats in the Boer war. Neither this Dutch jailer nor any of his staff are of a literary turn. I have seen him tear up half-a-dozen attempts, and take half an hour to address an envelope. Consequently his official jail returns could not be made to his government at all, did not the jail nearly always contain amongst its prisoners some one able to write Dutch fairly. In return the scribe is excused from his hard labour.

Prisoners of good conduct are allowed to send one letter, and receive one every month, to be read *en route* by the jailer. This little man will promise to post for you, but the more important the letter the greater is the

relish of the joke against the Uitlander in not posting it. To complain of a Dutch official to his Dutch superior is mere waste of breath.

Dick is a fine, well-shaped, handsome Basuto. He assisted some others in a burglary, and escaping with some bed-clothes and trifles, found when on the veldt that there was a white baby amongst the blankets. It was left where found in a bed-sheet, and survived; a blanket being 'too much worth' to leave for the baby, said Dick, with a grin. 'Sixpence,' 'Ketchie,' 'Loben,' 'Shilling,' 'Ticky,' very funny names the Kaffirs have, every second one being a 'Jan' or 'John.' The Kaffir yard is similar to, but separate from, the white man's yard. The Kaffirs are fed alternately on mealie pap or the Indian corn boiled whole, and one pound of meat twice a week. For meat they would barter their souls, and you can for a bit of abominable meat always get from them a bit of Transvaal tobacco of the same size, and good too. The ordinary Dutch warder is too brutal and stupid to require description; he only says No! to any request, and when he is not eating his dinner out of an old basin, spends his time half dozing, and, Kaffir guards loving rest also, escapes are frequent. Here is a Scotchman under whose special tutelage I lost whatever valuable personal property I took in. A clean-shaven, clean, smart little gray man of sixty, after years of tramping in absolute want, promoted from driving a baker's cart, he has just married and commenced life as a teetotaler and warder, having at last found an opening in life for the first time. He is already high in command, knowing how to get on. Speak or whistle and you are in the stocks, and no appeal; resist, and you will get three months more, possibly in irons, and twenty-five lashes; so your Uitlander does his thinking to himself. As regards taking prisoners' property, I have no hesitation in saying that the Dutch police are amongst the biggest thieves in Johannesburg; and this, after making full allowance for much exaggeration and falsehood which may be expected from prisoners' own accounts. Quite recently, after a large fire at certain grocery stores, a huge amount of groceries of all sorts were stolen and traced to the stations and houses of the fire-brigade and police, the latter being in charge of the burning buildings, keeping the crowd out, and helping themselves lavishly. Again, the head warder of the jail, a huge Dutchman, was sentenced the other day to some small inadequate punishment for stealing many hundred pounds' worth of money and property from prisoners in the course of a year or two. It is easy enough to take the money of a prisoner who is inside, safe for a long term of years—some are arrested with very large sums on their persons—and also in cases where the prisoner is too drunk to remember what he ought to have had with him when arrested.

Jovial tramps—on the wallaby' is the classical term in South Africa—these there always are, mostly Irish, who put in their winters in jail, and in summer beg and steal their way for hundreds of miles, working a little here and there at the farms they pass, but, poor

fellows, knowing no trade, and happy with a blanket, some mealie-meal, and a 'billy' for cooking or drinking water. They are worse off than Kaffirs, who know roots and fruits good to eat on the veldt as they pass. Reckless, broken-down gentlemen, too, are not infrequent, and may be met scores of miles from any house, striding on in a few rags, two-thirds of a pair of boots, and a 'Hallo, comrade, whither away?' to any one they meet in similar case. Desperate and successful criminals these make when they get into congenial society, or capital fighters in any small native war, should occasion arise. The Kaffirs are daily arrested by scores for being in town without a proper pass, or written authority, good for a month, value one shilling. Now the blacks cannot read, and the Zaps themselves (ZARP, on their tunic, stands for South African Republic Police) in many cases can make only a very poor attempt at it; so as the revenue accruing from the fines is very great, and the black prison labour from those who cannot pay is very valuable, it can be imagined that the poor Kaffir has a bad time. Complaints are frequent of the sapient Zaps trying to read passes upside down, tearing and throwing away valid passes and swearing the bearer had none (for a Kaffir's word is taken as nothing against a policeman's), &c. Your Dutch policeman is simply a raw illiterate Boer taken from a backward farm, scarcely able to read and write his mother-tongue, and speaking usually just a smattering of English. He is drilled a little in a back-yard, and placed on beat duty, but his knowledge of police duties is 'nil,' and miserably paid; and he is constantly striking to get pay which has been long since due to him from his lethargic superiors, a curious anomaly altogether in an up-to-date English-speaking city like Johannesburg. A few Englishmen, however, have been taken into the detective department, by whom all the important duty in the repression of crime is done.

The jail at Pretoria cannot be better described than as being a smaller edition of the one at Johannesburg. Black and white men's yards lie to the right and left, and a small separate yard is kept for the untried prisoners—white and Kaffir—who are not sent out to work before convicted, whites and Kaffirs merely occupying separate cells, and the white men keeping the blacks to their own allotted corner in the yard itself. Hither came Dr Jameson and his comrades ('Dr Jim' in South African parlance from Cape to Zambesi) after their one hundred and fifty mile hand-gallop dart for Johannesburg; thither, too, came the Johannesburgers who were subsequently imprisoned. The cells are some eighteen feet by twelve feet, and stone-flagged—three prison blankets for a covering, and one for a pillow: the regime in every other respect the same as at Johannesburg. To do the Boers justice, they allow untried prisoners to have in what they want and can pay for, if they can also pay them for passing it in. For a sovereign or less, had they not been political prisoners, admission could have been procured for anything in the world, provided it were not too large to go through the prison doors.

Pretoria itself is a pretty town with graceful

houses and gardens and good public buildings; its most striking feature is fine old fir and other avenues of trees, some seventy or eighty feet high, and fine broad roads.

VANISHED !

By J. S. FLETCHER.

I.

I HAD worked hard at my art for years without more recognition than artists get from publishers or editors who want designs for title-pages and book illustrations, and more than once I had felt half tempted to throw the whole thing aside and emigrate, or enlist, or do something that would have been equally foolish. But the thought of Helen Tresham had kept me going, and had made me brave when my own natural inclination would have led me to mere cowardice. While I was working in London she was toiling away at her governess work in St Petersburg, saving all that she could towards the home which we had set our minds upon making in England. At that time she used to write me the most cheery of letters—always bidding me hope and trust—the kind, sympathetic, helping sort of letters that good women do write to the men they love. Sometimes she used to blame herself for living in such luxury as she did (she was governess to the family of a Russian prince who lived in a palace), while I was slaving away in dreary London chambers. But then she would naively add, her salary was so good that she could save a great deal of money out of it, and every pound saved brought nearer the happy time. After I read one of her letters, I used to work feverishly, for I wanted her to come back to me, and I had made up my mind that I would never ask her to do that until I felt sure of success.

At last—what a long time it had been, and yet how quickly we forgot it when it was once over!—the time of waiting came to an end and our happiness began. At last my success was assured, and the people who had doubted or scorned me began to speak of me respectfully as a rising artist. There was no more need to execute pot-boilers—nay, there was no longer necessity to work more like a slave than a man. Success became a certainty—it was no longer a matter of speculation, but rather a question of degree. I had both feet firmly planted on the ladder—the only problem now was how far I should climb towards the top. And so Helen and I were married and settled down in a South Kensington flat, I to work at my art and she to direct, counsel, and inspire—all of which womanly duties came to her with natural lavishness. What children we were in those first happy days, and what a paradise our small establishment seemed to our eyes, blinded by love's roseate tints! I think we played at life for the first few weeks, but

after that we woke up to realise that life is a matter of variety, and so came sober reflection and steady work in its train. It was at that period of my career that I painted my picture of the balcony scene in 'Romeo and Juliet.' Helen sat to me for Juliet—I had never seen a woman's face that so adequately realised my own conception of Shakespeare's girl-heroine. I selected the moment when Juliet bends from the balcony to tell Romeo why she would have back her love:

But to be frank and give it thee again,
And yet I wish but for the thing I have;
My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep; the more I give to thee
The more I have!

There were people who objected to my picture when it was finished because Romeo's face was not seen. He stood with his back to the foreground, showing no more than the contour of an olive-tinted cheek. But there was design in that, for I wanted Juliet's face to dominate and light the whole picture, even as its original had lighted my own life. So, though it was entitled 'Romeo and Juliet,' it was really Juliet and no more. I had never a doubt of its success. It seemed to me, as I worked at it with Helen's face bending towards me from the improvised balcony which I had built up in my studio, that the people would crowd about it and wonder, and at last understand and go away pleased. And so it was no surprise to me, when the hanging committee of the Royal Academy gave the picture a place on the line, and the first visitors began to crowd round it with eyes and voices expressive of admiration.

Had that picture never been painted, it is possible that Helen and I had escaped a long year of sickening anguish.

I was strolling through the rooms of the Royal Academy one afternoon, some weeks after the exhibition opened, and went round to my own picture with a vague curiosity to see whether people still clustered about it. It had been so popular that the authorities had placed a policeman before it, and on this particular afternoon he stood there looking intensely bored, for there was absolutely nothing to occupy him. Only one person stood before the picture—a man, evidently a foreigner, clad in garments that were presentable and no more. It was, I think, his evident poverty that first attracted me to the man, but presently my interest transferred itself from his general appearance to the look in his eyes. He stood a little distance away from the picture, his arms folded over his tightly buttoned frock-coat, his whole body rigid and motionless, his eyes concentrated on Juliet's face. They were strange eyes—wild, fiery, keen—and just then they seemed to fasten themselves on the picture with a devouring interest.

The policeman on duty knew me, and saluted me with respect as a man who could make people feel an interest in mere pictures. I nodded and passed on. At the door of the room I turned and looked back. The man with the strange eyes was talking to the policeman, and just as I glanced at them I saw the officer nod his head in my direction. The stranger turned and looked at me, and it

seemed to me that our eyes met across the long room. I caught, at any rate, a peculiar glitter from them; then I turned away and professed to be intent on a picture close by. When I looked round again the man had gone—there was no one in the room but the policeman and myself. I sauntered round the room again, and stopped near my own picture. The policeman was looking at something which he held in his hand. He glanced at me and saluted me confidentially—almost appealingly. 'Beg pardon, sir,' he said, 'but what might this here be? It's money o' some sort, but I don't know what 'tis. That foreign cove that's just gone out dropped it into my hand as he went—I reckon it's not worth much—looks like a bit o' dirty brass.'

I took the coin in my hand and examined it carefully. It was dirty, and a little worn, but it was a Russian imperial rouble for all that. 'That's a very nice tip, my man,' said I, handing the coin back. 'It's a Russian gold coin, and its English value is about thirty-two shillings.'

The policeman turned more colours than one. He stared from the coin to me, and from me to the coin.

'It must ha' been a mistake,' he gasped. 'And yet—why, he took out a reg'lar handful of 'em, and just picked that out as if 'twas a penny!'

'I suppose the man thought he was only rewarding you in accordance with your deserts,' I said.

'Lor!' he answered. 'I told him next to nothing, sir. Just the artist's name, and as you were in the gallery I pointed you out—no offence, I hope, sir?—it's the usual thing. But thirty-two shillings—you ain't mistaken, sir? And 'im dressed like a pauper!'

I observed, with the air of one uttering an absolutely original remark, that one cannot always judge by appearances; and having advised the policeman to take his imperial rouble to a money-changer, passed on and went home. I believe I had dismissed the whole incident from my mind before I reached the end of Piccadilly—certainly I had forgotten it by the time I reached home, for I made no mention of it to Helen. I often wondered in the days that came after and brought so much anxiety in their train, if anything of our sorrow would have been avoided if I had told her. But the thing seemed slight and inconsequential—an odd-looking foreigner staring at my picture and giving its custodian a gold rouble—there was nothing in that to suggest the first step in an ugly dream—and so I let the incident pass unheeded.

II.

It was about a month later that Helen came to me one afternoon dressed for walking, and asked if I would go out with her for a while. I was busy at my easel, for the light was good and I was absorbed in a new conception. I looked at her, and wanted to go, and then at my picture, and wanted to stop. She saw my hesitation and retreated, laughing, to the door.

'Oh, irresolute lover!' she said. 'Is it so

hard to make up your mind as to the charms of your two mistresses? Never mind, dear, I'll give place to art for an hour. I have some shopping to do, and you hate shopping, don't you, poor darling? Go on with your work and be ready for my return in an hour, and then we'll have a walk in the park before darkness comes on. So *au revoir* !"

She threw me a kiss with her dainty fingertips and laughed and ran away. I heard the door close and the patter of her feet upon the stairs outside, and then I turned to my picture and worked steadily again.

An hour passed and still I worked and Helen had not returned. At the end of another half-hour I laid aside palette and brushes and made myself ready for our walk. Still she came not. I sat down and smoked, but at the end of two hours I went downstairs, and standing at the door of our house looked along the road hoping to catch sight of her advancing figure. Once I thought that I saw her in the distance, and I went to meet her only to find myself mistaken. I went back to the house and waited a while at the door. Ten minutes passed and there was no sign of her coming. I went up-stairs to our rooms and sat down to smoke in my studio. It was then nearly three hours since she had left me, and the afternoon was rapidly fading into twilight. Still I did not feel uneasy; it struck me that she had met some friend or other and made a call. She knew that I was busily intent on my picture and should not object to being left alone with it. So I sat there smoking and reading, expectant of her voice on the stairs at any moment. I had no thought whatever of wrong—how could I have?

I think I had worked longer and harder that day than usual—anyhow, something induced me to sleep. The book which I was reading dropped from my hand and I slumbered. While I slept I dreamed that Helen was in danger. I heard her voice crying to me for help. I had a momentary glimpse of her face, full of pain and fear. I woke with a start and looked about me. The studio was in darkness, there was no gleam of light save the faint rays of a gas lamp in the street outside. Something seemed to suggest coming sorrow and trouble: the air felt charged with it. I struck a match and lighted the gas, and at that moment the door opened to admit the parlour-maid, carrying my reading-lamp. I wanted to ask her if Helen had returned, and could find no words to do so. She set down the lamp and looked at me.

'My mistress has not come in yet, sir,' she said. 'Will you dine?—cook says that dinner will be spoiled—it's nearly seven o'clock, sir.'

Our usual dinner-hour was six, a convenient one for us because it was neither too early nor too late. I glanced at my watch; it was five minutes to seven. Where could Helen be? It was nearly four hours since she left home, and wherever she might have gone I felt sure that had all been well she would have returned to dinner. Then I remembered with a sickening sense of fear that we had promised to accompany some friends to the theatre that evening,

and had arranged to call for them at a quarter to eight. Even as I remembered that, a ray of hope flashed upon me: it might be that Helen had gone there. It was an improbable thing, but drowning men catch at straws, and I was by that time most seriously concerned at my wife's absence. I told the girl to keep dinner waiting, and snatching up my hat ran out to our friend's house. One word there sent me away again; Helen had not been there. But as I turned away a voice called me back: one of the daughters of the house had seen her at half-past three in Piccadilly. She was just going into Hatchard's book-shop, and had stayed a moment at the door to speak to her friend and to confirm our engagement for the evening.

There are, I think, few sensations more horrible than that of a man who loses wife or child in a great city and feels himself hopelessly at sea at the very outset of his search. I realised this sensation to the full as I walked away from my friend's house. I was by that time certain that something had befallen Helen. She might at that moment be calling on me for help as she did in my dream. And yet I was helpless, powerless. Which way should I turn amidst that awful labyrinth of streets? She had been more easy to find in the desert of Sahara than in that vast city.

I went home hoping to find her there. I looked into the dining-room. There was the cheery table spread for dinner with its two vacant places, and the shaded lamp-light falling on the polished glass and silver. But the room was empty, and so was the whole house, empty, at any rate, of her presence. I roamed from room to room for a while, too full of a sickening fear to think or speculate, but at last I could bear the suspense no longer. I left the house and drove to the nearest police-station and gave information.

There is a certain monotonous regularity about the ways and doings and thoughts of our police which is exasperating at times like that of which I am writing, but in spite of it their help is valuable, and it gave me some further hope to see how promptly their intricate machinery was put in motion. Perhaps I chafed somewhat under the cold, official questions of the inspector. He was full of motive and cause, I was concerned only with result and effect. I laughed when he asked me if there were any reason why my wife should leave her home, but I answered all his interrogations calmly, only begging him when they were finished to use his best endeavours as rapidly as possible.

I shall not relate in detail the history of the next twenty-four hours. My wife did not return. We found that after leaving home she had walked to Piccadilly and had purchased two new books at Hatchard's. After that there was no trace of her. But later in the day the police took me to a lonely spot in Kensington Gardens where they had discovered traces of a struggle. The wheel of a conveyance had impinged on the grass, and near it were the marks of feet. Close by lay a parcel in brown paper which proved to contain the two books purchased by Helen at Hatchard's. It turned

my heart to ice when I saw those books, for their discovery seemed to suggest a tragedy. But there was worse in store.

'Here's something else,' said an inspector. 'It lay close by the books, but whether it has anything to do with the case or not I don't know. Look at it.'

He held up a *carte-de-visite* portrait as he spoke. I snatched it from him—merciful heavens! It was a photograph of the man whom I had found gazing at my picture in the academy!

III.

A year passed by. It seemed like a century to me, for as the long days lengthened into longer weeks they brought me no news of Helen. I had spared no time and had spent every available penny in my efforts to trace her, but without result. She had vanished as completely as though something had snatched her away from earth. The ordinary methods of the police were absolutely futile, they resulted in mere nothingness. After a time I discarded them and turned inquiry-agent on my own account. It seemed to me that the clue to the mystery of Helen's disappearance lay in the strange man who had shown so keen an interest in my 'Juliet.' I secured the portrait of him which the police picked up and began to look for him diligently. I hunted the foreign quarters of London, I spent hours, days, aye, weeks in the cafés and restaurants frequented by foreigners, always seeking a face, the face of the man whose counterfeit presentment I carried in my breast-pocket. I had other copies made of that photograph, and gave them to friends of mine whose occupation or tastes took them into the haunts of foreigners. It seemed the best clue that we had. And yet it was hopelessly weak, I felt that from the first. There was no name on the card, no address; nothing to show where or by whom the photograph was taken.

I do not think that I ever gave up hope altogether, but at the end of the year there came upon me that awful sickness of heart which only hope deferred and disappointed can cause. For me it had been a terrible year. I had lost my wife with all the horror of uncertainty as to her fate. Had I found her dead it had been better than to know that she had disappeared from me in a fashion that suggested all manner of nameless horrors. I had searched for her and found no trace of her. Now it seemed to me that it was utterly useless to do more. My resources were almost exhausted, for I had earned no money during that twelve months of sickening suspense, and all that I had previously saved had been spent in my efforts to find Helen. And I was no nearer finding her at the end of the year than at the beginning.

I sat in my studio one afternoon, staring vacantly at a canvas that stood upon the easel near the window. It had its back turned to me; I had turned it that way months before, for it was the picture upon which I had been working when Helen left me, and I had never felt able to look at it after realising her loss. I wondered if I should ever paint again, if

years would heal my wound, if time would soothe the gnawing agitation that still possessed me. I got up and began to pace up and down the room, all the bitterness of the past year welling up afresh within my heart, and it was while I was thus sorrowfully engaged that I heard a hesitating knock at the door. It was so faint that at first I paid no heed to it, but when it was repeated in a louder though still curiously hesitating fashion, I went over and opened the door and looked out.

The landing was dim with shadows and at first I saw no one. But presently I caught sight of the figure of a man standing within the gloom. He breathed my name in a low voice.

'Mr Vincent—the painter?' he whispered, questioningly.

'Yes,' I replied. 'Who are you? Come in; I can't see you there.'

'Are you alone?' he asked. 'Quite alone?'

'I am quite alone. Come in; why do you stand there?'

I drew back and motioned him to enter. The man stepped out of the gloomy shadows and followed me. A tall, black-haired, black-bearded man with a great cloak and slouched hat. He put the door to behind him, and at the same instant looked round my studio as I have seen captive wild beasts look round a cage. And there was something in the glitter of his eyes that made my heart suddenly leap in my side and then begin to beat with an awful sense of fear or hope, I knew not which.

'Ah!' I cried. 'It is you, the man whom I saw before my picture?' He turned and looked at me, and as he looked he put up his hand and pulled off wig and beard. Then of course I recognised him perfectly. Those were the same eyes that had haunted me, but the face was changed. It spoke of suffering, privation; there was a nameless horror in it.

'Yes,' he said, 'yes, it was I that you saw there. I saw you too. I was looking at your "Juliet." The picture of your wife.'

He walked slowly across the room, and then I noticed that he limped and shuffled in his walk. He dropped wearily into a chair and faced me again. I went up to him with a curious feeling at my heart.

'Why have you come here?' I cried. 'Do you know that I have been searching for you for a year? Why have you come? Is it'—

'To tell you of your wife,' he said. 'Yes, that is it. I have endured much to do that. But I promised her.'

I nerved myself with an effort and tried to speak, but my tongue had grown dry.

'Go on!' I said at last, the words rattling in my mouth. 'Where'—

'She is in the fortress of St Peter and Paul,' he answered. 'I was there, too, until they sent me off to Siberia. I escaped *en route*, you understand?'

I understood nothing. I sank into the nearest chair and stared at him.

'I am Ivanovitch,' he said. 'Stepan Ivanovitch. It may be that she never mentioned me, why should she? I was also an artist;

we met in St Petersburg ; it is now a long time ago.'

Still I continued to stare at him. Was it a dream ? Was this great, gaunt, hollow-cheeked man with the half-mad eyes the figment of a vision ? I put out my hand mechanically and touched his sleeve. He looked at me curiously. Yet I could not believe. My wife, my Helen, a prisoner in St Peter and Paul ! Impossible ! impossible !

I rose and tottered rather than walked across the room to a little cabinet in which I kept a spirit-case. I poured out some brandy and drank it at a gulp. The strong spirit revived me. I turned to the man and felt prepared to hear him. He looked wistfully at the spirit-case, and I filled a glass and handed it to him.

'Now speak,' I said. 'Tell me all. I don't understand ; make it plain to me.'

'Da !' he said, 'but it is so plain, when one knows how these things are done. So plain—oh yes, so very plain. Your wife and I were arrested in Kensington Gardens—it must be a year ago—by the agents of the Russian police. We had met there—it was accident, that—and we were talking, for we knew many people in Petersburg, and then they were upon us, for they had been on the outlook for me and her too, and all was quiet just there, and they had their conveyance waiting and we were aboard their ship in the Thames, oh, so quick ! It is this way,' he said, glancing at me ; 'they work quietly, but surely. Da ! what can you expect ?'

'But their motive ?' I cried. 'What motive had they in arresting my wife ?'

The man shrugged his shoulders. 'Nu ! as if one should know that ! But she and I, we were both members of a little circle in Petersburg—it was literary, artistic, you understand ? and some of us afterwards—well, we were not well seen of the Government. Not she, you know, not she at all ! But her name was on the rolls, and when they decided on arresting us, of course they included her amongst the rest.'

I stared at him in sheer amazement. 'Do you mean to say,' I asked, 'that the Russian police track people down like that ?'

He sipped the brandy in his glass, and glanced at me curiously.

'I mean to say,' he answered, 'that if they are on the lookout for you they will find you, even though you retreat to the uttermost corners of the earth.'

'But their evidence ?' I cried ; 'their evidence against my wife ? What have they to bring against her ?'

'Nothing, but that she was member of a circle, other members of which are known as the most implacable Nihilists of the day. Ah, that circle ! Alexis—they killed him—and Olga—she is in Siberia—and so, too, are Lyof, and Anna, and Stiva, and there was Sonya—she has disappeared—Da ! it is curious how unfortunate we have all been.'

'And my wife ?'

'She is in St Peter and Paul ; I know she is there, though I never saw her. I never saw her after they had us in the carriage to-

gether, but she knew what had happened, and she said two words to me and I two to her, and they meant that I would escape if I could and find you. And I did—we were on the way to Siberia ; she was not in the gang, I made sure of that. She is there, they will keep her there, oh, perhaps a very long time.'

'And may they release her in the end ?'

'Da !' he spat contemptuously on the floor. 'Release an Englishwoman ? To tell her story here in England ? You are mad to think of that.'

'Then what am I to do ?'

He shrugged his shoulders with a hopeless gesture. 'There are means,' he said. 'Something may be done ; we will take counsel.'

So at last I knew where my wife was. But the knowledge brought me no peace. I was rather stirred up to a fever of horrible revolt at my powerlessness to help her. What could I do ? My resources were drained, I had few friends, and there was the awful, adamant Russian police system to attack, singlehanded. I felt sick at heart, broken down, as I thought of my own weakness and of the strength of those whom I must fight. It was so hard to feel myself there in London, moneyless, and unable, because of my great anxiety, to work, while she, my wife, was a prisoner in that terrible fortress—or on the way to Siberia. For a while Stepan Ivanovitch's news seemed to paralyse me. But desperation set me to work. I began to seek out ways and means. A brilliant idea struck me—the purchaser of my picture 'Romeo and Juliet' was no less a person than Lord A—, the then Foreign Secretary ! I would go to him ; surely he would help me. And there was the Prince Z—, in whose family Helen had been governess ; he, too, would not refuse his aid. I thought of these things and took courage. That evening I spent in drawing up a statement of my case. The next morning I called upon Lord A—, and saw him personally. And when I left him it was with new hope, and yet he had told me kindly enough not to be too sure of success, for the matter bristled with difficulties and obstacles. A week later I saw Lord A— again. He told me that the matter must now pass entirely out of my hands. I was to leave it with him and with Prince Z—, who happened to be in London at the time. All that I could do was to wait for the result. There was a kindly pressure in his hand as he dismissed me that gave me new confidence. Nor was that confidence misplaced. A month later Lord A— sent for me one morning, and after giving me a hearty greeting that made my heart beat with expectant hope, showed me into a small cabinet adjoining his room. He pushed me in and closed the door quickly after me, and I turned and found—my wife !

I am afraid it was some time before we left the room, for we forgot everything but ourselves. But at last we came out to thank Lord A— for all he had done for us.

'No more flirtations with the disaffected, you know, Mrs Vincent,' he said as he bade us farewell.

'But it was so innocent !' said Helen. 'We

were just half-a-dozen young people who met to discuss?—

'Never discuss!' said his lordship laughingly. 'At any rate unless you are safe in South Kensington. Good-bye!'

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

MUCH excitement has been caused by the report of certain experiments by Professor Röntgen of Würzburg with Crookes's radiant-matter-tubes. Such a tube, when electrically excited, gives off not only light waves, but radiations of a totally distinct character, the nature of which has not yet been determined. These radiations will penetrate wood, ebonite, leather, and other opaque substances, including most of the metals; but glass, which is so transparent to ordinary light, is opaque to them. It therefore becomes possible to affect a photographic plate shut up in a wooden box, and the shadows of different articles placed on that box are permanently impressed upon the plate. The most curious result yet attained is by placing the living hand above such a box, when it is found that the radiations are stopped by the bony structures but not by the flesh. The result is a photograph, or rather shadow of a skeleton hand. These experiments have lately been repeated in this country, and specimens were reproduced in *Nature* of January 23d. They may be regarded as a further development of the researches of Crookes, Hertz, Lenard and others, put in such a form as to excite the interest and curiosity of a wonder-loving public.

As our readers know, constant war has been waged during the past fifteen years upon the rabbits of Australia. In 1881 a member of the New South Wales legislature expressed his disappointment that the Government programme did not include any scheme for dealing with what he regarded as a most important question. But he was laughed at for his pains and told that a bill might as reasonably be introduced for the extermination of the lively flea. But now the laugh is on the wrong side, for the rabbits have increased and multiplied to such an extent that the loss to the colonies concerned, by their depredations, amounts to millions of pounds sterling. Every remedy has been tried: poisons, stoats, weasels, cats, armies of men, and hundreds of miles of rabbit-proof netting. Millions of rabbits have been destroyed by these various agencies, but the animals are so prolific that if a district be almost cleared of them, in twelve months they are as numerous as ever. It is now agreed that the evil has been battled with too late, and that the winners in the war are the rabbits.

As might have been expected, the cheapening of electric glow-lamps, owing to the expiration of patent rights, has led to a serious deterioration in the quality of the articles supplied. Of course this does not apply to the best firms who make such things, but to others who have rushed into the business without the experience which successful manufacture of

such delicate articles demands. In Germany the mischief is so great that a committee has been appointed to inquire into the whole matter, and it is stated that the result will be a system of standardising which will lead to the rejection of hundreds of faulty lamps. It is probable that these latter may be thrown upon the English market, so that users in this country will do well to be on their guard. In the meantime, Mr Preece, the post-office electrician, who has some 50,000 glow-lamps under his control, is making experiments, the results of which, it is hoped, may assume such a practical form that it will become possible by noting the behaviour of a filament during one hour of incandescence, to estimate its probable longevity.

Professor McKendrick's series of six lectures at the Royal Institution (London) on 'Sound, Speech, and Hearing' came to a conclusion last month. Perhaps the most interesting lecture was the concluding one, when the professor explained the mechanism by which insects, birds, and mammals produced the varied sounds peculiar to them. It was shown, experimentally, that the tones in the human voice came from the vibrations of the elastic folds connected with the larynx which are known as the vocal chords, and a model of the parts, in which the chords were represented by thin india-rubber capable of being tightened and relaxed by attached mechanism, was made to sing the diatonic scale with accuracy. The model could also say 'Papa' and 'Mamma,' but here its vocal efforts ceased. We are reminded, by these experiments, that a talking machine which employed india-rubber chords, lips, palate, &c., was exhibited in London about twenty years ago. It was most ingenious in construction and was worked by a keyboard. Unfortunately it took almost a life-time to learn how to manage it, and then the results were not very satisfactory. It was of course totally eclipsed by the phonograph.

One of the most curious agricultural products known, if it can be placed in such a category, is cochineal, the chief seat of which industry has for many years been the Canary Islands. The story of the establishment of cochineal culture in the islands is a curious one. In 1835 a native gentleman became acquainted with the methods pursued for producing this dye in Honduras, and brought with him from that place specimens of the cochineal insect and the cactus upon which it thrives. At that time the wine growers at the Canaries were flourishing, and no other kind of industry was believed in. The culture of the cochineal was regarded as a mad freak, and its introducer met with opposition on all sides. Then the dreaded phylloxera made its appearance in the vineyards and ruin faced the wine growers. They were glad indeed to take up the despised cochineal, and the old vineyards were given up to the new industry with such success that in one year the value of the exported dye reached not far short of one million sterling. The introduction of aniline dyes changed all this, and it is feared that the cochineal industry can never regain its former position in the Canary Islands. We gather

the above facts from an interesting article in the *Produce World*.

It would seem from the statistics given in a recent bulletin of the ministry of agriculture, that France will in a few years be as destitute of wolves as Britain has been for some centuries. For a long time the French Government has put a price on the heads of these ferocious animals, and the figures given represent the number of premiums demanded rather than the number of slain. Last year the figures published were two hundred and forty-five, as against two hundred and sixty-one in the previous year, the total having decreased during the last thirteen years, although the reward has been made greater. In 1884 the wolves accounted for numbered thirteen hundred and sixteen, but in many departments where they were formerly numerous they are now quite extinct. The majority of those now killed are in the central region of France, and in contiguous departments. The eastern departments of the country used to furnish the greatest number of wolves, but the animals are now rarely found in those districts.

The number of railway servants injured or killed during the operation of shunting and coupling up vehicles is terribly large, and some hundreds of patents have been taken out with the object of making the dangerous operation of coupling so far automatic that men need not get between the trucks or carriages. At a trial of these inventions about ten years ago, prizes were awarded to some of the best, and since then many other contrivances have been devised. Among these, the automatic coupling patented by Mr A. B. Ibbotson has recently been shown in London. It is so arranged that when two vehicles come together they are immediately locked, unless, that is, it is desired that they should merely push one another without joining together, when the turn of a handle, which can be worked from either side of the carriage, prevents the automatic arrangement from acting. A vehicle having the patent attachment can be coupled up to another furnished with the ordinary link, and the amount of slack between any two vehicles can be easily regulated. The new invention seems to promise well.

We are glad to see that it is proposed to erect a monument, in the town of Dôle (Jura), where he was born, to the memory of the late Louis Pasteur, who may justly be regarded as one of the greatest men France has produced. A committee, at the head of which is M. Felix Faure, President of the Republic, has been formed to carry out the work, and subscriptions are invited from all. The work to which Pasteur devoted his life would require a volume to describe in anything like detail, and we can only name here one of his achievements. He was the first to demonstrate that certain tiny rod-like bodies (bacteria) were the sole exciting cause of anthrax, or splenic fever in cattle, and to point the way to its prevention by inoculation. Three years ago it was stated that two and a half million sheep, three hundred and twenty thousand horned cattle, and two thousand eight hundred and sixty-one horses had been inoculated from the Institute Pasteur—and material had been sent to India for the

inoculation of one thousand elephants. It is not too much to say that by Pasteur's researches splenic fever has been conquered as effectually as Jenner vanquished smallpox; moreover, he pointed the way by which it may be reasonably hoped that many of the dire diseases which afflict man may be successfully grappled with.

The increase in the number of electric mains in our streets during the past year has been very marked, and has been brought unpleasantly before the notice of wayfarers by excavated roads and upturned footpaths. With increased facilities for obtaining the electric current, many new applications of it have been brought forward, and among these is its adaptation to the purposes of projection in the optical or magic lantern, and its use in theatres as a substitute for the lime light. The latter form of light requires the presence of oxygen and hydrogen gases under pressure, and although of late years the apparatus employed has been greatly simplified, it is still cumbersome and possesses drawbacks which make it compare very unfavourably with the two simple wires which form the only visible agents of the far more brilliant electric arc-light. A new form of lamp, or regulator, to furnish an electric arc-light for the purposes just indicated, has recently been patented by Mr C. M. Hepworth, and has been introduced under the name of the Ross-Hepworth projection lamp by Messrs Ross, the well-known opticians of London. This apparatus gives a steady, brilliant light, and has all the necessary movements to fit it for the purpose for which it is designed.

A new kind of nozzle for fire-hose has recently been introduced into this country from the United States, where it is said to have met with much favour. The nozzle is bell shaped, and within it is a ball which causes the jet of water, as it proceeds from the nozzle, to form a cone shape, which is found very effective in quenching fire, without causing the mechanical injury to fittings which accompanies the use of the ordinary jet. A good deal of wonder has been excited by the circumstance that, although the ball is perfectly free, it keeps its position in a stream of water at one hundred pounds pressure without flying off into space. The same surprise was excited many years back, when it was found that egg-shells, india-rubber balls, &c. could be made to hang in mid-air, by the action of a jet of steam, and experiments have more recently been made in connection with compressed air, which give precisely the same results. Faraday long ago gave the true explanation when he showed that the issuing jet of steam under pressure causes induced currents of air to press upon it from all sides, and it is these which are able to support solid bodies submitted to its influence. The action of the ball in the water-nozzle may doubtless be explained in the same way.

The cheapened production of the metal aluminum, which has led of recent years to its greatly extended use for so many purposes, has tempted many to start factories for its reduction from the earths with which it is combined, and the process most generally adopted is electrolysis. The great drawback to the use of the metal is the ease with which it

loses its lustre, unless well lacquered, and the deterioration is known as rusting. An explanation of the cause of this tarnishing has been offered to the Paris Academy of Sciences by M. Henry Moissan, who has shown that aluminium produced by electrolysis contains from one to three per cent. of sodium, a metal which shows a tarnished surface half a minute after a clean face has been exposed to the atmosphere. It is easy to see how the presence of such an easily oxidisable component can lead to the rusting of the aluminium, and now that the evil has been traced to its source, a remedy for it should not be difficult to find.

It is not often that the inhabitants of Britain have a chance of beholding a total eclipse of the sun; however, such a chance will come in August next to those who possess the leisure and means to take a trip across the North Sea to Norway. It is such a common holiday trip that hundreds will probably avail themselves of the facilities offered by the different steamship companies for viewing the eclipse. It was in 1851 that a small band of scientific men observed a solar eclipse from Bue Island, Norway. But in half a century the world has learnt many things, and among them the art of carrying sightseers to all parts of the world with speed, safety, and in comfort. The crowds of holiday makers who will proceed to Norway to see the eclipse on August 9th, have only one thing to fear, and that is, that at the critical moment the sky may be overcast and the sun hidden from view.

The President of the Sanitary Inspectors' Association, Sir B. W. Richardson, in delivering his annual address to that body, touched upon many things which are of interest to the community at large. It was the duty of sanitary inspectors to teach cleanliness in dress, food, and drink; in the home, and even in the air we breathed. Man was rather given towards gluttony than starvation, and he was in favour of the vegetarian system of feeding, although it was not a perfect system, while with regard to drinking, water was the only liquid required. Work did not often kill, but labour of one kind should not be prolonged more than eight or nine hours, and when the time of recreation came, the mind should have such change of pursuit as would cultivate muscular effort, and bring into play the various senses. Good sanitation would do much for the working classes, and although it was sometimes difficult to combine cleanliness with poverty, still it could be done, especially if we recognised on what few ministrations health depended.

At Edinburgh recently, Mr J. R. Cameron lectured on the 'Bacterial Constituents of Milk,' and alluded to the practice (discussed in *Chambers's Journal* for 19th October 1895) of adding boracic acid to milk as a preservative, which he condemned. The usual dose was one ounce of acid to ten gallons of milk, an addition which was especially injurious to children, and had a bad effect generally upon the mucous membrane and upon the kidneys. Another danger arose from the circumstance that milk might have a preservative added to it before being sent to the retail dealer, and the latter being ignorant of the fact added some more, thus doubling the

injurious action to the prejudice of the unfortunate consumer. Several cases of illness have been reported from the use of boracic acid, and in the German navy it has been prohibited as a preservative for meat. Salicylic acid is another injurious antiseptic, and this has already been forbidden in France as a food preservative. There are other antiseptics which are equally objectionable, benzoic acid, for example, which produces a peculiar irritation in the throat, and formaline, which is a powerful irritant to the eyes and mucous membrane. All these drugs are used in milk with impunity, a prosecution being almost unknown, and there is reason to believe that they are also commonly used in cream and butter.

It is well known that prospectors have often had to turn back from promising gold districts for want of water, for without water little mining can be done. The dry process, as applied to gold-mining, which has been introduced by Messrs Harvey & Co., 11 Queen Victoria Street, London, will therefore be regarded with interest. The ore is first submitted to a stone-breaker, which reduces the pieces to the size of an egg; it is then screened and submitted to another breaker, and finally to crushing rollers, which reduce the rock to fine powder. It is then ready for leaching by the cyanide or other process. Manual labour is almost entirely dispensed with, from the time the rough quartz is fed into the machine, until it is delivered in a finished condition.

PRIÈRE.

FROM THE FRENCH OF SULLY PRUDHOMME.

If you knew the heart is sore,
That dwells apart without a home;
At times before my lonely door,
Your steps might roam.

If you knew how thoughts are bright,
When sad souls feel a tender glance;
Your eyes would seek my window-light,
As if by chance.

If you knew the healing cheer,
A heart can to another bring;
You sure would, like a sister dear,
Sit near and sing.

If you knew I love you so,
If you knew your soul's true place;
You e'en might enter, soft and low,
In simple grace!

WALTER GURNER.

* * * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed to the 'Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
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Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 636.—VOL. XIII.

SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

BILLY BINKS—HERO.

BY GUY BOOTHBY.

CHAPTER I.

It was at the close of the hottest day, of the hottest week, of the hottest month, of the hottest year, that ever I remember in a fairly long colonial experience, that I made the acquaintance of that precocious ragamuffin, William Binks, since called—Hero.

So hot indeed was it that summer on the great plains that stretch away across Queensland, from the Dividing Range to the Never-Never country on the other side of the border, that even the oldest blacks agreed in saying that they could not remember such another in the whole course of their lives.

I was managing a frontier station in Queensland at the time, the western boundary of which extended almost up to the South Australian border. On one side of the fence was grass, grass, interminable grass, and on the other only sandy wastes and spinifex. Perhaps because there was nowhere to go when you *had* passed it, we never met a stranger to the westward of the head station, and for the same reason but few to the eastward. If you would properly understand what I am about to tell you, you must be sure always to bear this fact in mind.

When first I met the subject of my narrative I was out with two companions looking for lost horses in our back country, and our search had already lasted three days longer than we had expected it would do. No man who has not experienced a summer in that part of the world could have any possible conception of what having to do work in it means. Imagine overhead a cloudless sky; underfoot a dry, cracked, unwholesome-looking earth, that quivers and seems to rise and fall before one as, if set on carriage springs. On either hand mirages

may be observed: exquisite pools of water; where moisture there is none, surrounded by thickly foliated trees and backed by mountain-ranges, when there are not a thousand trees in five hundred square miles, and scarcely a hillock over ten feet high in more than twice that area.

It was nearly dusk, and according to custom we were beginning to look about us for a place where we might pitch our camp. As I have said, our party consisted of three men, myself, a station hand, and a small blackboy named Rocca. We had four animals, three saddle-horses and one pack-horse, and I can safely assure you we were all sick to death of the business that had occasioned our absence from home.

Behind us, and on either hand, stretched the plain as far as the eye could reach, flat and unbroken as a billiard table, but ahead we could just distinguish the presence of a small watercourse, flanked as is usual in that part of Queensland by a fringe of dull green coolabahs and ti-trees. Towards it we made our way, hoping almost against hope that when we reached it we should find a little water left in some hole for our tired animals. For ourselves we had no need to be anxious as the pack-horse still carried an untouched bag.

We were scarcely a hundred yards distant from the creek when I saw the station hand, Wilson, who was riding a short distance in front, hoist himself up in his stirrups and look under his hand towards the thickest part of the clump of trees ahead. A moment later he beckoned the blackboy to his side, and, when he arrived, pointed to the ground. The boy gesticulated in answer, and then both pulled

their horses to a standstill and waited for me to come up.

'What do you see?' I asked, as I ranged alongside.

'Nothing much,' said the man, who in spite of having spent the first fifteen years of his life in a Queensland coast town was nearly as good a tracker as the blackboy. 'Only there's been somebody along here not a great while since, and by his tracks I should say he was riding a police horse.'

'But what could a policeman be doing out on this side of the head station?' I inquired, knowing as he also did that it was a most unlikely place for a limb of the law to be.

'My word—look there!' interrupted the blackboy, at the same time pointing to the trees ahead. 'Me think it that chap make one track longa here.'

I followed the direction of his hand, and there, sure enough, standing in the shade watching us, was a tiny figure. Simultaneously we stuck our spurs in our horses' sides, and cantered forward, the figure disappearing as we approached.

When we drew up at the pool, it was to discover a tragic incident. On the right bank of the little watercourse lay the dead body of a horse, with a considerable portion of his flesh missing, while under a ti-tree, on the left, was an elderly man, in the last stage of collapse. The atom who had watched our approach from the bank was, however, nowhere to be seen.

I sprang off my horse and approached the man. As I did so he looked up at me in a dazed fashion.

'So you've got me after all, have you?' he said huskily. 'Don't be too sure, though, for I may slip you yet!'

'What's the matter with you?' I inquired, disregarding his speech. 'Who are you, and how does it come about that you are here in this plight?'

'You ain't a trap, then?' he replied, meaning a police officer. 'Well—that's all right! I guess I'll be able to bilk 'em after all!'

He said this with an air of considerable cunning, and as he spoke I made a new discovery. His hands, which were crossed upon his breast, had hitherto been covered with a bit of saddle-cloth. Lifting this, I found that his wrists were manacled together.

'Hullo!' I cried in astonishment. 'You've got the darbies on. Come, I say, this won't do at all, you know. You've been up to some mischief.'

'Not much,' he answered, 'and, what's more I don't mind tellin' you about it. You see I was accused of duffin' a horse at Blakeley's place, out Binburi Creek way, a fortnight or so ago, an' the sergeant and a trooper was takin' me into Barcaldine on 'orseback for trial, when I lit out with the boy, an' made my way west, thinkin' of trying to cross the border into South Australia and so give 'em the slip!'

'And why didn't you do it?'

'Cause my 'ealth broke down!'

'What's the matter with you, then?'

'I dunno myself! I've been like this 'ere a week now, and some'ow I reckon I won't get much better this side o' Kingdom Come.'

'But how have you lived? Where's your flour, and how have you managed for other rations?'

'Haven't had none—not these three days past. We've lived on that there horse ever since he died, and the water in the hole yonder to wash it down. But somehow I reckon I'll not want much more. I believe I'm tuckered out.'

'You say "*wz*." Is there somebody else with you, then?'

'Only the boy. Call the young dog; he's hidin' somewhere.'

'What's his name?'

'Billy. Call Billy Binks.'

I lifted my voice, and in lusty tones demanded that Billy Binks should forthwith make his appearance. In answer a weak little voice piped out from the tree above me, 'Hullo, you there! What d'y'er want o' me?'

I looked up, and there sure enough, his head protruding from among the leaves, was Billy, gazing down at me in evident apprehension.

'Come down!' I said sternly.

'No jolly fear,' Billy promptly replied; 'I ain't coming down to be copped by no traps, not if I know it. If you want me, you'd best climb arter me!'

'I'm not a trap,' I answered reassuringly. 'And if you will come down I will promise you that you shan't be hurt.'

'True as wax, so help you never?' asked Billy suspiciously, only he requested me to affirm my assertion with a much stronger, and possibly a more appropriate, oath.

'True as wax,' I answered, trying my best to refrain from smiling, 'so help me never!'

Thereupon he clambered solemnly down and stood before me.

Such a boy, or rather such a queer little atom of a man, I had never seen before, and probably never shall see again. He was then about—well, at the very most, he could not have been more than eight years old; he was dressed in a red Crimean shirt, much torn, and a pair of man's trousers, rolled up at the bottom. The tops of the latter garments reached to within an inch or so of his armpits, and gave him a most extraordinary appearance. On his head he wore an almost crownless cabbage-tree hat, and from under its brim poured a tangled wealth of nut-brown hair. He had not one regular feature in his face, and such as he had were as ugly as it would be possible for a boy's to be. Indeed, his twinkling little brown eyes were his only redeeming point, and they were not in any way remarkable. I stared at him with a little embarrassment; he, on the contrary, was not in the least abashed by my gaze, but stood attentively regarding me with all the assurance of a man of fifty, his hands meanwhile thrust deep down into his enormous pockets. Possibly my candour had convinced him of the sincerity of my motives; at any rate in less than an hour we were on sufficiently intimate terms for him to borrow a stick of my excellent tobacco, and to forget to return what he did not use.

We camped that night at the waterhole, and with every hour the sick man's condition became more and more hopeless. What was the

matter with him I could not imagine; one thing, however, was very certain; it was quite out of the question to think of trying to move him to the station. The distance was fully twenty miles, and he would not have lived to get half-way.

Towards midnight he began to wander in his talk, and when day dawned, there could be no possible doubt that the end was very near. Shortly before six o'clock he regained consciousness, and his first act was to call Billy to his side. The urchin went up and stood before him.

'Billy,' said this parent, looking steadfastly at him, 'I've got something to say to you. You just go along with this gentleman, and don't you get up to mischief. But the first time you come across that red-headed sergeant out Barcaldine way, you just give him one for his nob for me. And don't you forget it!'

Billy sealed his promise with an oath of such remarkable scope and atrocity, that I could hardly believe I heard aright, and five minutes later, in spite of our efforts to detain it, the life of his parent departed from him.

We buried him beneath the coolabah under which we had found him, and after breakfast started back for the station, taking Billy with us. The urchin, who seemed in no wise to sorrow for the author of his being, rode the fourth horse, balancing himself like a monkey upon the packs.

When we reached home and I had dismissed the men at the store, I ordered Billy to follow me, and made my way across the horse paddock to my own residence.

My wife was sitting in the veranda sewing, but as soon as I appeared in the garden she rose and came down the steps to greet me.

'What on earth have you brought with you?' she asked, after she had kissed me.

I followed the direction of her eyes to where Billy was standing in his favourite attitude, his hat on the back of his head, and his hands in his pockets. He was not in the least shy, but regarded my wife steadfastly for upwards of half a minute, then the house and garden. Being apparently satisfied that what he saw was worthy of his consideration, he spat over his left shoulder, tilted his hat forward on to his eyes, and began to whistle softly.

Having furnished my wife with an account of my finding the youth, I suggested that she should take him into the house, give him a bath, and endeavour to make him look as much like a human being as possible. This she consented to do, and Billy was led reluctantly away.

Ten minutes later she came out of the bathroom, which was at the end of the veranda, and passed by where I sat perusing my letters.

'How does he take to the water?' I asked, a little curiously.

'Better than to the soap,' she answered, with a laugh. 'I've left him by himself to splash about while I hunt for some clean things to put him into; those he owns at present are only held together by their dirt.'

Having found what she wanted she returned to the bathroom. Her stay there, however, was

of short duration. In less than a minute she was standing before me again.

'Have you seen the boy?' she cried. 'He's not in there!'

'He must be,' I answered; 'he hasn't come out this way. Are you sure he isn't hiding?'

'Quite sure!' she replied. 'Come and see for yourself.'

I followed her into the room, but there was no sign of Billy there.

'He's gone and taken all his old rags with him,' she said. 'How annoying!'

'Don't be angry with him, dear,' I replied. 'Remember he's only half civilised. He can't be very far away, so while you're getting his things together I'll endeavour to find him.'

But though I searched every conceivable spot in and around the house, it was without success. The boy was not to be found. It was almost dark before I *did* discover him, and then he was *curled up in the loft of the fowl-house fast asleep*. To induce him to come down, I had to promise that he should not again be bathed by a woman. His pride had received a shock, and it was some considerable time before he got over the indignity to which he had been subjected.

MORE ABOUT THE GOLD QUESTION.

In March 1894 (*Journal*, No. 535) we set forth the position of the gold question as it then existed, and explained the conditions of the monetary revolution through which the world is passing. An enormous increase has since been made to the world's supply of the yellow metal, and the revolution is still in progress. The silver-using countries have not yet abandoned the silver standard; bimetalists still advocate the dual standard; and the United States still preserve the appearance of a currency based on silver which is really backed by gold. But with the large increase in the supply of gold, the chances of what are called the 'rehabilitation' of silver are more remote than ever.

In our last article we stated the probability that the output of gold in 1894, when fully reckoned up, would be found to have considerably exceeded thirty millions sterling. It actually amounted to £35,993,000 sterling, according to the valuation of the director of the United States Mint. In his opinion the increase indicates the groundlessness of the Silver Party's contention that not enough gold is or can be produced to supply the demand if that metal is to be the sole standard of value of all the nations. Beyond question the increase is not merely temporary, but will continue for some, possibly many, years to come at an increasing ratio; for in none of the important gold-fields are there yet any symptoms of exhaustion, while the new fields are becoming more and more productive as they are being developed. Before we examine the condition and prospects of production, however, let us briefly review the position of gold in the economic world.

The function of a metallic currency is to fulfil the duty of every civilised community, to settle the terms in which commercial transactions shall be carried on. Just as a State determines what measures of weight and volume shall be used within its jurisdiction, so it determines the quality and character of the coins which shall be used in the mercantile exchanges of its citizens. To these coins it gives the stamp of authority which makes them 'current coin of the realm,' and 'legal tender' for the prescribed amounts, but to its coinage no State can give a higher intrinsic value than that possessed by the metal of which it is composed. In selecting metals for coinage, however, nations have selected those which, being most precious, vary in the smallest degree in relation to other commodities. A given quantity of one or other of these metals is the standard by which the value of all other things is measured. Thus it is that gold and silver have been adopted for coined money, and thus it is that gold and silver coins became not only media of exchange, but also standards of value. The two functions, however, are quite separate and distinct. As Lord Liverpool wrote: 'Civilised nations have generally adopted gold and silver as the material of their money, because these metals are costly and difficult to procure, little subject to variation in value, durable, divisible, and easily stamped or marked.' Now in this country gold became the actual standard of value, when in the second half of the seventeenth century the guinea began to be coined, although it was not legislatively proclaimed the standard until later; in fact, the history of the guinea is one of the most important and interesting chapters in the history of currency. What, however, has always to be remembered is that the establishment of the gold standard was not by measures expressly designed for that end, but under the influence of commercial and economic forces altogether independent of any theory as to the material out of which metallic money ought to be made. Gold is the most precious and durable of all metals, and gold is practically the money of ultimate settlement of all the world, because it is the only recognised standard in London, which is the centre of the world's exchanges and finances. Bimetallists would have it otherwise, but meanwhile gold is king.

Nothing more remarkable in the history of economics has occurred than the discovery and rapid development of the African gold-fields. Not only has it been demonstrated that the mineral wealth of the Dark Continent, south of the Zambesi, is enormous, but an enormous amount of wealth and enterprise has been directed to the winning of it. The rapidity with which an immense mining industry has sprung up in South Africa is unprecedented, and one reason for that is the unique regularity of the geological formation in which the auriferous beds are found. The richest field, as yet at any rate, is that of the Witwatersrandt district of the Transvaal, in which republic in the early seventies

gold began to be worked, in spite of the prejudices and opposition of the Boers. It was not, however, until 1884 that the famous De Kaap deposits were found, nor until 1885 that the renowned Sheba mine was floated into a company, and it was towards the end of 1886 before the present prosperous city of Johannesburg began to rise out of the Veldt. The story of the 'golden joys' of Africa (*Journal*, December 14, 1895) is thus one of ten years, but here is a curious and even startling fact. The Stock Exchange of Johannesburg sprang into existence in 1887, and before the end of that year some sixty-eight mining companies were on its list, with an aggregate nominal capital of £3,000,000. During the late 'boom' in the market for mining shares in London and Paris, the market value of the shares of the group of South African companies was in the aggregate over £300,000,000! It is true that these are not all gold-mining shares, but the great majority are of companies either for or in connection with gold-mining. In 1887 the Transvaal produced only about 25,000 ounces of gold; in 1894 the output was 2,024,159 ounces; in 1895 it was 2,277,633 ounces.

Just before the Californian discoveries, namely, in 1849, the world's annual output of gold was only about £6,000,000. Then came the American and Australian booms, raising the quantity produced in 1853 to the value of £30,000,000. After 1853 there was a gradual decline to less than £20,000,000 in 1883. This was the lowest period, and then the De Kaap and other discoveries in Africa began to raise the total slowly again. Between 1883 and 1887 the El Callao mine in South America and the Mount Morgan in Australia helped greatly to enlarge the output, and then in 1887 the 'Randt' began to yield of its riches. The following are the estimates of a mining expert of the world's gold production during the five years 1890-94—namely, 1890, £23,700,000; 1891, £26,130,000; 1892, £29,260,000; 1893, £31,110,000; 1894, £36,000,000. In these estimates no distinction seems to have been made between mine valuations and mint valuations; but it will be observed that the estimate for 1894 corresponds with that of the United States mint authorities.

As to the future of the South African sources of supply, it is estimated by Messrs Hatch and Chalmers, mining engineers, who have lately published an exhaustive work on the subject, that before the end of the present century the Witwatersrandt mines alone will be yielding gold to the value of £20,000,000 annually; that early next century they will turn out £26,000,000 annually; and that the known resources of the district are equal to a total production within the next half century of £700,000,000, of which, probably, £200,000,000 will be clear profit over the cost of mining.

These estimates are considered excessive by some authorities; nevertheless it is to be remembered that the productivity of deep-level mining has not yet been properly tested, that even the Transvaal itself has not yet been thoroughly exploited, and that there is every reason to believe that Matabeleland and Mashonaland are also rich in gold. As the

gold production of the world in the present year (1896) will probably foot up to double that of ten years ago, it is certainly not an extravagant expectation that other twenty millions per annum will be added to the total within the next ten years. For we have not to look to Africa alone. In Australia, besides the regular sources of supply which are being industriously developed, new deposits are being opened up in Western Australia at such a rate that some people predict that the 'Cinderella of the Colonies' will soon become the richest, or one of the richest, members of the family.

The following shows the contributions towards the world's gold supply on the basis of 1894:

United States.....	£7,950,000
Australasia.....	8,352,000
South Africa.....	8,054,000
British Columbia and South America.....	2,000,000
Russia.....	4,827,000
Other countries.....	4,807,000
	£35,990,000

What will be observed here is the curious approximation in the totals of the three greatest producers. The Australian output had increased by over two millions in five years, owing partly to improved methods of mining and treatment of ores, but chiefly to the new mines in West Australia. ('Westralia,' which produced but 59,548 ounces in 1892, raised 207,131 ounces in 1894, and 231,112 ounces in 1895.) And within the same period the Russian and American supplies had each increased about a million owing to better methods of working. The South African supply had grown up from one and a half millions in the same period entirely from new developments. If the expectations of West Australia are realised, Australasia will be found to have kept the lead in the order of production, but in 1896 South Africa will probably exceed them all and continue to head the poll for many a year to come. In fact, when the totals for 1895 are made up, it is not improbable that South Africa will be found at the top.

Now, in former articles we have dealt with the effect of the gold supply on the prices of commodities, and have shown how, with the appreciation of gold, the purchasing power of the sovereign increased. Why, it may be asked, if gold is now so plentiful—the golden stream nearly doubling in volume within ten years, and likely to be even more plentiful in the near future—is there not a reversal of the conditions which have become so familiar of late years, and a return to a higher level of prices? We shall endeavour to explain this, but must at the same time dispute the popular fallacy that high prices are synonymous with prosperity, and that cheapness necessarily means depression of trade.

In the first place then, prices *have* risen and are rising, although so gradually and sectionally, that the general public have not marked the fact. Wool, cotton, iron, copper, and leather, among leading staples, are all now considerably above the lowest prices which they recently touched. Even silver itself has recovered part of its value in relation to gold, though, of course, as yet a long way below its old ratio,

and that to which the bimetallists would like to restore it by legislation. We would recall that when treating of the prospective effect of the new African discoveries, we said that the immense increase in the surplus of gold available for money (allowing always for what is annually required in the arts) would bring about a considerable fall in the value of the metal measured in commodities, and that what happened after the Australian discoveries might be expected to happen again. But, at the same time, we said that the change would be neither so rapid nor so tremendous in extent, because there were many gaps in the world's gold currencies to be filled up before the over-supply could be felt, and also because the world is now larger and the area of distribution of gold for money purposes is much greater.

Events have proved the correctness of our forecast early in 1894. The supply of gold has increased enormously, as we have just shown, but the effect of it is only being gradually made apparent. The tremendous over-supply of silver has been a factor in the problem, but that does not fall for consideration just now, having been already discussed. What is to be pointed out, however, is the new field for coined money which is created by the very developments which increase our supply of the yellow metal. Thus, some people look at the enormous amount of gold that Africa is sending us, and try to measure its effect upon the currencies of the world, as they existed before this new source of supply was opened. But this is a radical error, for South Africa is taking back from us in coins two-thirds of the gold she is sending us in bullion. To put it into figures, in the first eleven months of 1895 we received from the Cape £7,420,000 in uncoined gold, and in the same period we sent back to the Cape £5,270,000 in gold coins. Thus, on balance, South Africa is not adding so much as might be supposed to the available stock of gold in the general markets of the world. A similar position exists in Western Australia, to which we are sending back sovereigns while receiving the metal from her.

For, after all, gold-mining is only an industry, like coal-mining, or any other pursuit in which rough labour is allied with scientific knowledge and technical skill. Every ounce of the glittering yellow metal taken out of African quartz does not represent so much clear profit. It represents a large amount of expenditure of capital and energy, and the actual margin of profit on the ounce of gold so won is small. It is not like picking up nuggets and diamonds in the bed of a stream. Now the development of this industry develops in turn other industries—the construction of railways, the erection and transport of machinery, the building of roads and bridges, and the rapid creation of towns. A large population gathers not for gold-mining alone, but also for the supply of the wants of the gold-miners. The necessities of the new communities have to be met at first by the importation of almost every item—in itself a large business—but those necessities also compel attention to local resources, the

cultivation of the soil, the provision of water, the supply of heat and lighting, &c. And so a new world springs up in the desert, every day developing new industries, giving employment to a growing population whose wants also continue to grow, both for the appliances which can, as yet, only be obtained from Europe, and for coined money, to employ in wages and purposes of trade.

It is in this way that South Africa and West Australia are helping and will help European trade and commerce, and will help to relieve Europe of some portion of its surplus capital and labour. It is not the money represented by the shares in the 'Kaffir Circus' that is working the industrial and monetary evolution, but the persistent industry which is likely to bring us the newest of the new things Africa has been reputedly producing for centuries—a solution of the great currency problem.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

By SIR WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER VIII.—A POLITICAL MEETING.

THEY were nearly all men: working men. A river-side music hall, crammed with people; the stage empty. Lady Frances in a stage-box with me—looking out upon the people. The faces she gazed upon shone white and shiny in the glare of the gas; they were serious faces; they were hard faces; the impression produced by the collective face was one of honesty and slow powers of perception, but with determination. Most of them sat in silence, leaning back contentedly and in no hurry; the men who work actively with the bodily limbs all day for their wage are never in a hurry so long as they can wait sitting. When they talked, it was seriously and with earnestness, conducting their argument on the approved lines, in which one man advances an array of alleged facts which he cannot prove, and the other contradicts the allegations, though he cannot disprove them. This is the argument of the tap-room, the bar-parlour, and the smoking-room. The more carefully we adhere to the old-fashioned, well-tried method, the more animated, spirited, and convincing is the conversation. Imperfect knowledge is most clearly indicated by frequent interruptions and noisy denials. Now these men were arguing on the constitution of the country, being ignorant of what it is, how it has grown, whence it came, or what it means. And they wanted to change it, being ignorant of what these changes would mean, or how they were to be effected, and how other members of the community would receive them. There were Socialists among them, men who look forward to the time when every man, for the sake of every other man, and not for himself at all, will gladly do a hard day's work

and get no payment or profit but only the equal ration, the same garb, the same warmth, and the same roof; and they think that the levelling up or down to the same unbroken plane will create, for the first time in history, happiness complete. 'When Adam dived and Eve span, where was then the gentleman?' Alas! It is the same old, old story. There was then no gentleman, but in the third or fourth generation after Adam, there was founded the first family of gentle folk—they were, I believe, Welsh. There were also in the crowd, Anarchists, a kindly race who want to sweep away all laws, with the police and the lawyers, and the judges and the prisons, and to leave everybody to work out his own redemption for himself. And there was among them the common Radical who desires nothing more than the abolition of the Crown, the Church, and the Lords, after which no one certainly can expect or desire anything more. And there were many of that numerous class, the Wobblers, who incline this way and that, being unable to balance the advantages of any one plan against any other. Mostly, however, being poor and dependent, they desire change. Some of the women came with their husbands, and brought their work with them, the business of the evening being quite below their own attention. The British matron, who is a practical and keen-eyed person, is seldom able to understand that the abolition of the House of Lords will give her husband better pay or herself more housekeeping money. Here and there one saw a woman's white face, with set lips and furrowed brow. She was that rare woman who can see the wickedness of things, and the imperfection of things, and the injustice and cruelty and uncertainty of things; until she ceases to believe in the powers that be, or in the doctrines of church, of teacher, and of preacher, and longs to shuffle the cards and try a new deal if haply that may bring a remedy to the evils of the time.

Lady Frances looked down upon this crowd watching and wondering, interested merely by the sight of the lines of faces below her, line behind line, row behind row; while I told her the things that are written above.

'I am glad I came,' she murmured. 'Oh! I am very glad I came. George, I like to see them. Give me, I say, men and women. I say it again—men and women.'

'It is seven o'clock,' I said. 'Time's up. The man you are going to hear to-night, Frances, is the strong man—the man who has ambitions such as you would like me to have.'

'I never thought you would become a local demagogue, George.'

'He is coming out immediately. He knows the people pretty well, and they know him. This evening he will pronounce one of a series of orations he has delivered on the questions of the day. The captain tells me that he has set the people thinking and talking in a very surprising way. You see how they are discussing

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things. All these discussions are on the text of his last address.

'The Wonderful Person of Wapping. I await him with interest.'

Then the orator appeared, stepping out from the wings, and walked quietly to his place beside a small table, which, with a decanter and tumbler, formed the only furniture of the stage.

There was no chairman. At the outset one had been proposed, but the lecturer scoffed at the suggestion, said that he could very well introduce himself, and propose for himself a vote of thanks. He, therefore, stood alone. In his hand he bore a bundle of papers, which he carefully placed in order on the table for reference.

Then he stood upright, facing his audience, and bowed slightly to the round of applause which greeted him.

Lady Frances saw a tall, broad-shouldered, and singularly handsome young man, with a broad square forehead—the light fell full upon it—clear eyes—hair in very short brown curls, such curls as denote strength—a serious face—too serious for his time of life—but then it is only your light comedian, your touch-and-go comic man who can face an audience with a grin, and it is only a ballet-girl who can appear with a smile. There was not, however, the slightest touch of embarrassment or stage fright about him. He stood easily, in an assured attitude standing well apart from the table, so that his figure was practically the only thing to be seen upon the stage. He was dressed in faultless evening clothes, with a white flower in his button-hole. This was the man who, a few weeks before, scoffed at the observance of evening dress, and sneered at the niminy-piminy ways of the fine gentleman.

'Why,' whispered Lady Frances, 'the man is dressed like a gentleman. What does he do that for? He is only talking to work-people. Look at his face, George; it says as plain as if he were speaking, "I am not afraid—I am a better man than anybody here."'

The orator held up his hand. Everybody settled in his place; everybody adjusted his feet—mostly under the benches; every other person cleared his throat; the women who had come with their husbands looked up at the orator and round the room; then they took up their knitting again and abstracted their thoughts into some useful line, such as boots and the acquisition of boots. The people on the stairs loudly besought those within to make room for them; one might as well implore the sardines to lie a little closer in their box. So they wailed aloud, like the foolish virgins, because they could not enter. And then the orator began.

I am profoundly sorry that I cannot, in this place, give you even the heads of this discourse; because his words and his facts were forcible and convincing, and I am sure, dear reader, you would like to be hammered with facts and convinced with reasons. I cannot, however, do so, for the simple reason that the laws of copyright forbid. The orations are now published, and everybody can get them and read them.

He began, however, with a personal point.

'I told you,' he said, 'at the outset, that I am here because I propose to represent this borough at the next general election. The reason why I have taken the trouble to address you is that you will be my constituents, and it is always best when a man has got opinions of his own that he should instruct his constituents upon them. Mine are not opinions: they are convictions; and my convictions, as I have shown you so far, are simple truths. You are all the better, I am quite sure, for having learned those truths: you will talk much less nonsense, and you will advocate much more sensible measures. So much, of course, you will acknowledge. Now the next general election is said to be close upon us. No one can possibly know for certain how close it is, but we may expect it any day. Therefore it is well that I have educated you to support my candidature.

'I also told you at the outset that I mean to enter the House as an Independent member. I am informed that no Independent member is of any importance in the House; that he cannot influence votes, which belong to this party or that party; that the House is divided into this flock of sheep and that flock of sheep, which follow their leaders when the bell rings. Very good. My friend, I don't want to influence votes in the House. I want to influence you—you—not the House at all. I care nothing about the House. It is through the House that one speaks to the country, nay, to the world, if one is strong enough. Very well. Now remember that when I am elected I am not going to call myself your servant, nor shall I have the hypocrisy to pretend that I am sent to the House with a mandate from you. Why, you don't think I am going to accept any instructions from anybody here, do you? You to give me—Me—instructions? My dear people, understand that your collective wisdom is no more than the wisdom of the best man among you, and your best man isn't a tenth part of the man that I am in knowledge, or in ability either. Do not make any mistake. You may be my servants, if you please; it is the best thing in the world for you to learn of me, to question me, to elect me, but I shall never be your servant. You can teach me nothing, but I can teach you a great deal. Understand, then, I shall be an Independent member in every sense—free of interference of party, free of interference of constituents. So you had better make up your mind at once to turn out one of your present members—I do not in the least care which—and to put me in his place. But, by the Lord, I tell you, I promise you, I will make you proud of your member!'

He stopped. This was only the prologue—the fore-words. He drank a little water and took up his papers.

The people, so far from resenting this plainness of speech, clapped and applauded mightily.

'His assurance becomes him,' said Lady Frances. 'A more arrogant speech I never heard. After that, they are bound to elect him.'

And then he turned to his subject. He had

at least the gift of oratory, and the first and the most important part of this gift is the power of clear and orderly arrangement; he knew how to select his points and to present them so that a child might understand; he knew how to repeat them; to present them again in another form, yet still so as to be intelligible to all; he knew how to present them a third time, so that there should be no chance of forgetting them. He had a flexible, rich, and musical voice, which rolled in thunder in the roof, or dropped to the soft strains of a silver flute. He knew when to stir the people's hearts, and when to make them follow to a cold chain of reason: when to make them laugh, and when to make them cry. The man played with his audience; and if you watched him, as Lady Frances did, you would observe that he rejoiced in his power; there were moments when he used this power wantonly—for his own pleasure when it was not wanted. Now and then, when he trampled upon some pet prejudice and exposed some cherished illusion, there were sounds of disagreement but faintly expressed and quickly hushed. Thus he spoke of Socialism:

'Do not,' he said, 'be led away by theories of what may be or might be. We are concerned with what is not, not what may be. Man is born alone—absolutely alone in the world—he grows up alone; he learns alone; he works alone; he has his diseases alone; he thinks alone; he lives alone; he dies alone. The only thing that seems to take away his loneliness is his marriage. Then, because he has another person always in the house with him, he feels perhaps that he is not quite so lonely as he thought. It is illusion, but it cheers him up. Every man is quite alone. Remember that. Everything that he has is his alone; he cannot give it away if he wishes. His face belongs to himself alone—there is no other face like his in the whole world, and there never has been. In the resurrection of the millions and millions of the long-forgotten dead there will be no face like any other face: no man like any other man. Quite alone. He cannot part with his gifts, his hereditary powers and weaknesses, his learning, his skill of hand and eye; his thoughts, his memory, his history, his doings, his follies—nothing that he has can he impart to any other living creature. It all belongs to him. He is alone in the world.'

'Quite alone—he and his property. Remember this, and when you hear men talk of things equal and things equally divided, ask how the most important property of all is to be divided—a man's strength and skill and ability. For you are not equal: there is no equality.'

This was only a bit out of the middle of the oration. You will find plenty of pages in the printed book as strong as this passage.

He concluded at last, amid a storm of cheers and shouting.

At the door, as they went out, we met Captain Dering. I introduced him briefly.

'I saw you in the private box,' said the Captain, taking off his hat to Lady Frances. 'What did I tell you? He winds 'em about like a bit o' string; he does what he likes with 'em.'

'And will they vote for him?' asked Lady Frances.

'They will. To a man. Because he isn't afraid to have a mind of his own, and to speak it out, and to let 'em know what he thinks about their collective wisdom. Lord! their wisdom! Look here, now. With permission, madam' (the Captain was courtesy itself with a lady passenger); 'it's the same all the world over. And if you want to see what all the world wants, go and look for it aboard ship, because a ship is a world by itself. Very good. What do the sailors want? A man who palavers and pretends to take their advice? Not a bit of it. A man who talks about their wisdom? Not a bit of it. They know they've got no wisdom. They can't even pretend to navigate a ship. They want a man to take the command: a skipper who will say, "Go there; do this, — you!"' begging your pardon, madam. Ask their advice? I'd like to see a sailor's face if his captain asked his advice.'

'You like a strong man everywhere, Captain Dering,' said Lady Frances. 'So do I.'

'George,' said she, as we drove away, 'I have had a most delightful evening. Thank you, ever so much, for bringing me here. Your orator is a very strong man indeed. He speaks like a gentleman, yet he called himself a Master Craftsman—I suppose from some proud humility. "We are all working-men," I heard an archbishop say once. I thought it was rather humbug.'

'This man is, indeed, a Master Craftsman. He understands honest work with his hands as well as any working-man present. In fact, better.'

'He appeared in evening dress. Do Master Craftsmen habitually wear evening dress?'

'The garb proclaimed the difference between his audience and himself. He does not appear before them as a workman, but as their master in every sense. The evening clothes are an allegory, you see. He told them pretty plainly that he is their master.'

'He did indeed.'

'Seeking election, not in order to carry out any views of theirs, you see, but to advance his own views. I think he was quite right to put on the dress-coat.'

'He certainly speaks like a man who knows things.'

'The things that man knows, Frances, would sink a three-decker. And the things he does not know couldn't float a canoe.'

'Your metaphors are mixed, George, but you mean well.'

'You perceived, of course, that he is not a scholar. These self-taught men never are. He lacks the literary phrase, except, perhaps, when he comes to personal appeal. But the literary phrase may come. He acquires everything with amazing ease the moment he learns that it is necessary.'

'And he is—your cousin! I had forgotten that. Why, it accounts for the strange resemblance. I was haunted all the time by his likeness. I could not think what likeness. It is you, George; he is strangely like you. Only bigger, I think.'

'Yes. Bigger all over. And more ambitious, Frances.'

'Oh! and he is teaching you his trade. And what have you taught him, George?'

'Nothing worth speaking of. You see, a man brought up at Wapping, which is only a little isolated slip of ground between dock and river—a kind of island—has very few chances of acquiring the air of society.'

'George, you have taught your cousin manners—I know you have. Do you think that he will not betray himself?'

'I hope he will, because there will be no pretence. But in all essentials he will be fit for presentation in your own drawing-room, Frances, where I hope to bring him with your permission.'

'Bring him by all means. It is always a happiness to meet a strong and clever man. I think your cousin, to look at him and to listen to him, must be as clever as he is strong. George, give him if you can a lighter style. It is all very well to be intensely earnest at certain points—especially the weakest in an address—but he must not be intensely earnest all through. Teach him to laugh a little and to smile sometimes.'

ROME AFTER THIRTY YEARS.

Few cities, ancient or modern, have seen so many changes as Rome. From a small beginning she grew until she became mistress of the world. Then she fell before the barbarian hordes, and great was the fall. Again she became the centre of the papal power, but under that government made little progress. Now she is the capital of United Italy, and is rapidly rising from her ruins. Early in the century Mrs Hemans wrote :

Rome! Rome! thou art no more
As thou hast been!
On thy seven hills of yore
Thou satst a queen;
Thou hadst thy triumphs then
Purpling the street;
Leaders and sceptred men
Bowed at thy feet.

Rome! thine imperial brow
Never shall rise.
What hast thou left thee now?
Thou hast thy skies!
Thou hast the sunset's glow,
Rome, for thy dower,
Flushing tall cypress bough,
Temple and tower.

When the 'Roman Girl's Song' was written, it seemed safe to prophesy that the Imperial City would never again rise, and that nothing of it would descend to posterity except its glorious sky and the memories of the past. But time works wonders; it would astonish the tourists who, in ever-increasing numbers, annually visit Rome, could they realise the changes which have taken place, not since the days of the kings or emperors, but within the last thirty years.

Our first visit to Rome was in 1863. At

this time the Pope was a temporal as well as a spiritual prince, and things were in a rather primitive condition. To get into Rome then, or being in, to get out of it, was troublesome. Passports were absolutely necessary, and these required the papal *visa*. They were delivered to the police, and retained during the traveller's sojourn in the Papal States. In exchange, a permission to reside, and on leaving, another to depart were given, and these permits were exchanged for the passport at the frontier town as the traveller left. All this cost a good deal of money, and was extremely irritating. Even to reach Rome in those days was not so very easy. There was on this side only one railway to it, the short line from the port of Civita Vecchia; and if travellers objected to the sea, and wished to go by land, either the public diligence or a *vettura* became necessary. The journey from Florence to Rome occupied thirty-six hours, and from Bologna fifty-two hours; the diligences started three times a week.

Having got into Rome, what did the traveller find? Apart from the ruins, and unless his visit was at Easter or during some great church festival, he found himself in an extremely quiet and intensely dull city. There seemed to be no trade, and little traffic of any kind. The streets swarmed with priests and monks in all kinds of dresses, but with little else. A stray cart here and there, with a barrel of wine on it, might occasionally be seen, but no omnibuses or public conveyances except cabs. At night the city was not, or at least sparsely, lighted. In the leading street, the Corso, there were three or four lamps hung across it, but most parts were in total darkness after the shops closed. We lodged in one of the streets running out of the Piazza di Spagna, and in going home after dark it was necessary to grope along the wall and count the doors until we arrived at our own.

The Jews' quarter or Ghetto—then usually visited by travellers—was close to the Tiber; so close, indeed, that when the river overflowed its banks, the Ghetto was partially inundated. The street itself was composed of miserable houses and dark shops. At all the shop doors quantities of old clothes were exhibited for sale. Packed like herrings in a barrel, the Jews of Rome lived here; indeed they were allowed to live nowhere else. At one time no less than four thousand inhabited the Ghetto. On the Saturday before Easter, every year the Roman Church baptised into the Christian faith a recanting Jew from the Ghetto. The ceremony was performed with great pomp and parade in the church of San Giovanni in Laterano, and it occasionally cost the authorities a good deal of money to induce a Jew to undergo it. If fair means did not procure the Jew, others were tried. The permanent results were extremely doubtful.

When Pio Nono came to the papal throne, the walls of the Ghetto were levelled, and the Jews were allowed to live and trade beyond its precincts. These boons were afterwards to some extent withdrawn, and at the time of which we are writing, an American writer, then living in Rome, described the treatment of the Jews as 'shameful, intolerant, and unchristian.'

In the Corso there were annually horse-races—literally horse-races, there being no riders. The horses, having on their backs and attached to their sides iron balls with sharp spikes, were turned loose at the Piazza del Popolo, and rushed, maddened by their unusual harness, along the Corso to the Piazza di Venezia, where the race ended. The owner of the winning horse there received the prize, contributed by the Jews.

Another feature of Rome thirty years ago was the group of artists—a somewhat Bohemian colony, now merged and lost amidst the largely increased population of the present day, but then very distinct. At the Lepre at dinner-time, and in the Café del Greco in the evening, they were inevitably to be met. The Lepre and the Café del Greco were both in the Via Condotti. Across the Piazza di Spagna, the steps leading up to the Pincian Hill were the favourite lounge of artists' models.

The Carnival, and the numerous festivals of the church presided over by the Pope in person, were then celebrated in the city with great pomp, and attracted crowds of visitors from all lands. On one occasion we had the privilege of seeing and sharing in the blessing of the people by the Pope Pio Nono. The sight was most impressive. After celebrating Pontifical High Mass in the church of Santa Maria Maggiore, assisted by his famous choir, his Holiness, clothed in a magnificent dress of white and gold, and wearing the triple crown, was carried in a sort of palanquin to the roof of the church. A priest then knelt before the Pope and held open a book, out of which the blessing was read. We never heard a finer or more powerful voice than that of the old Pope; and at the conclusion, when he rose, spread out his arms and pronounced the blessing, notwithstanding that the military band in the square began to play, the crowd to cheer, and the guns of St Angelo to fire, yet loud above all the din, the voice of the Pope was distinctly heard rolling out the words of blessing over his people. At the same time an indulgence on paper was cast out from the balcony and floated down to the ground. We joined in the scramble for it, but unfortunately did not succeed in capturing it. As we walked down towards the Quirinal, the Pope and his cardinals—one of them the famous Cardinal Antonelli—passed us. His Holiness must have known that we were heretics, as we merely lifted our hats and bowed, and did not do as the Romans

did—kneel in the street. But he gave us a benevolent smile and the usual benediction, made by raising the right hand with the thumb and two fingers erect.

The great place of resort for the beauty and fashion of Rome was—then as now—the Pincian Hill; and here every afternoon there was an endless stream of carriages driving round and round, while the band played in the gardens at the top. The cardinals were almost always to be seen, not seldom the Pope himself, and very frequently Bomba, the ex-king of Naples.

Passing along the almost deserted streets at night, the ears of the visitor were frequently assailed by fierce shouts, and if a stranger, he had no doubt that a deadly quarrel was going on; but he was quite wrong. It was only the Romans playing their favourite game of morra—a game which was well known to the ancient Egyptians as well as the old Romans, and is popular still, not merely in Italian lands, but in China and the South Sea Islands. Two people stood opposite each other with the right hands closed before them. Then simultaneously and quickly each threw out the hand, some of the fingers extended, others closed, and called out loudly the number of fingers he supposed he and the other player had exhibited. Any one guessing the true number scored a point, and five points generally constituted the game.

In addition to this intellectual game, there were the cafés and the theatres. The theatrical entertainments were very good, and the cost of attending them was exceedingly small. While in the leading theatres of London or Paris there is usually one great actor or singer who overshadows the rest of the company, in Italy all the actors were more nearly on the same level. Many an evening we have enjoyed an Italian play or opera at the modest cost of a lira (ninepence-halfpenny). In the summer-time, when the Apollo and the Valle were closed, the Correa was opened in the Mausoleum of Augustus; there was no roof to it but the sky. The performance began at five, and ended at eight or half-past. The price of a chair in the pit was a lira, and there was no objection to a cigar. The last time we were there the play was Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. The acting was excellent, and the text of Shakespeare translated into Italian was closely followed. In the Italian theatres then you could for a lira have seen Ristori and Salvini in the same plays as they performed in London, where gold had to be paid for entrance.

There was only one cemetery in Rome, excepting of course the English one, and the curious charnel-house under the church of the Cappuccini. The public cemetery was outside the Porta San Lorenzo, and a more repulsive place it is difficult to conceive. Death was viewed with such horror by the Italians, that, when it entered a house, the whole family, if they could afford it, left the dead to the care of the priests, and took their departure. They did not return till the funeral was over (which they did not attend) and the house was fumigated. At nightfall a procession of Frati conveyed the corpse to the church. These Frati were enveloped in dark cloaks which

covered even the face, two slits being cut for the eyes, and they carried lighted tapers. It was an eerie sight one of these funeral processions. The coffin was taken to a church and left there in charge of the priests till midnight. At that hour the Frati came again, and the coffin was placed in a public carriage, along with others, for conveyance to the cemetery of San Lorenzo. This cemetery was about a mile beyond the Porta San Lorenzo, and for many years it was a disgrace, not only to Rome, but to civilisation. It consisted of a large walled-in space containing a number of great wells or underground tombs of stone-work, each closed in by a block of travertine stone. Daily two of these were opened, one for the bodies of men, the other for those of women, and into one or other of these all the contents of the carriage were emptied. The scandal was so great that the Pope, Pius IX., set himself to reform matters, and he did so. A great contrast to this was and is the beautiful English Protestant cemetery on the Ostian Way outside the city.

In 1863 the population of the city was 180,000. In 1895 it was much more than doubled, the commune containing then over 451,000. Necessarily, this increase required a corresponding increase of house accommodation, and that has been supplied to an extent that makes it scarcely possible to recognise in the gay modern city the Rome of the Papacy. This reformation, as some call it, the desecration, according to others, commenced when the Italian troops entered Rome and it became the capital of United Italy. In the reign of Pope Gregory XVI., the predecessor of Pio Nono, a scheme was devised for the opening up of a waterway to the sea by utilising the Tiber; and for the establishment of a line of steamers to Ostia. No doubt was entertained that the pontiff would hail a proposal so clearly for the benefit of his capital, but a difficulty arose. What would become of the draymen and of their teams of bullocks which conveyed the goods slowly and laboriously to Rome? Clearly the new steam-power would end all that, and this must not be. The Pope refused his consent, and the scheme had to be abandoned. It was amiable, but it was not business, and under such a government the stagnation of the city life can well be understood. We understand the old project is now being revived. This is but one illustration of the intolerable load which then weighed upon all enterprise, and kept Rome the sleepy, dead-alive place that somewhat elderly travellers remember so well.

But Rome being freed from the papal yoke, the work of reconstruction went on with leaps and bounds. The old wooden shed, two miles away from anywhere, which formed the only station of the Roman railways, disappeared, and a large handsome station took its place. Instead of the solitary line to Civita Vecchia, Rome soon became united by the Ferrovie with all Italy. The line to Naples, opened in the last days of the Papacy, was vigorously worked. A new line connected the capital with Florence, Bologna, Milan, and Venice. The Civita Vecchia line was carried on to Pisa, Leghorn, and Genoa, and there connected with the line to Turin.

So that one could go by rail from Rome to any part of Italy, and the produce of the country and of other lands flowed into it.

Thirty years ago, where the railway station now stands there was only a desert; now round it has grown up a populous city. A handsome new street leading to it, the Via Nazionale, has been opened up from the Corso, at the Piazza di Venezia; and the buildings in that street and beyond it, even to the walls of Rome, are public buildings, shops, and dwelling-houses of the most palatial kind. The wonder is where the money came from to erect them. The kingdom of Italy is generally supposed to be *vergens ad inopiam*, but truly in Rome there is no appearance of this. Go where we will, change meets us at every turn. Cross the Tiber, and in Trastevere the work goes on; and the new buildings approach the castle of St Angelo and the Vatican. Massive quays line the Tiber, as in Paris the Seine is lined; and along the course of the river handsome streets and squares are being erected. Even around the majestic ruins space is being utilised, although the ruins themselves are kept sacred as yet.

No greater change could be conceived than that exhibited in the streets of Rome of to-day, which now are full of life and bustle. At night they are brilliantly lighted with gas and electric light. In the piazzas, military bands usually play in the evenings. The swarms of priests and monks have disappeared. Omnibuses and trams run in every direction.

Probably the greatest street change has been the removal of the Ghetto—not merely the restrictions, but the thing itself. All is swept away, and wide streets and squares occupy its site. Being in Rome last year, we directed our steps to the place where the old Jews' quarter stood. The police knew of it historically, but when you asked them to point out the spot, you received vague general directions; all the old landmarks were gone. Peace be with its ashes! Though antiquaries may regret it, humanity must rejoice over its fall.

Another thing we missed was the gathering of the artists in the Condotti. The Lepre has disappeared, and the Café del Greco is nearly as much changed as the city around it. No doubt, there are still artists in Rome, probably more of them now than formerly, but the city has so extended, that they are lost in the crowd, and cannot be recognised. The models, too, are gone from the Piazza di Spagna, and except at the church doors, few beggars are to be met.

From a pictorial point of view, many will regret the loss of the imposing festivals of the church in which the Pope and cardinals took part. The Pope is now, or says he is, a prisoner; he never leaves the walls of the Vatican, and the grand ceremonials in the city are seen no more. In the churches the festas are still observed, but wofully shorn of their lustre. And though the Pincian Hill is still as of old delightful for its view, and is still thronged, the personnel of the crowd is very different. Year by year the number of tourists increases. There is no trouble now in either entering or leaving Rome; passports are never inquired

after, and it is as easy to visit Rome as London.

With the modernising of Rome the coinage also has been changed. The scudo, paolo, and bajocco have disappeared, to be replaced by the lira (the Italian franc) and the centesimi. A good deal of the currency is paper, and the value fluctuates. Only at leaving, and on paying your fare to Paris, paper money is refused, except for the proportion of the fare to the frontier.

The quality of the water, formerly delicious, has sadly deteriorated. We asked the *cameriere* of the Café del Greco the reason, and he replied that the large increase of the population had compelled the authorities to bring in to the city supplies from other sources. The blend does not improve it.

Rome got a bad name for unhealthiness long ago, and it sticks to it still. Wise people, who know nothing about it, shake their heads and declare that it is tempting Providence to go to Rome, that malaria abounds, especially in the summer, and that it is a most unhealthy place. The Romans laugh at the idea; they never hear of malaria at their own doors. Rome, in summer or winter, is as healthy a capital as they can find. Let the croakers compare the death-rate of Rome with that of any of the capitals in Europe, and thereafter they will be silent. We have frequently visited Rome in the summer. The weather was perhaps a little warm, but not more so than in Florence, Milan, or Turin. In the evening it was delightful. No doubt, spring is cooler; but those who only go abroad during the summer holidays need not be deterred either by heat or malaria. The one is, but is quite endurable; the other is not, for judicious travellers.

In April and May 1862, Dr William Chambers visited Italy, and in *Something about Italy*, he says: 'After perambulating the Campagna in different directions, my conviction is, that, with some insignificant exceptions, it might be brought into the condition of sound arable land, and freed from its alleged noxious influence; and such being accomplished, it is difficult to see from what quarter Rome is to be rendered insalubrious. The unwholesomeness of Rome during summer, even as it stands, is, so far as I could hear, nearly an idle fancy; injury to health being caused much more by methods of living, and indiscreet exposure to heats and cold draughts, than to any insalubrity inherent in the atmosphere.'

Notwithstanding the prophecy of Mrs Hemans, the imperial brow of Rome has risen and is rising. Whether travellers would prefer the old regime or the new depends upon taste. The ruins are still there to speak for themselves; and in one respect at least, the visitors of to-day see them to advantage—the debris has been cleared away under which many of them were in whole or in part concealed. No doubt, modern buildings are rapidly hemming them in, and we may fear that, as space within the walls becomes increasingly valuable, the relics of the past may give place to the necessities of the present. Meanwhile there are no signs of this dire calamity. The number of old travellers is rapidly diminishing, and those who never

saw Rome as it was, will view with wonder and delight the mingling of the past and the present in the new Rome, that, phoenix-like, has risen from the ashes of the old.

THE ENGLISHMAN IN THE COLONIES.

ALTHOUGH the reading portion of the British public are willing enough to concede that travel expands a man's ideas and increases his general knowledge, yet there still seems to be a prevalent notion amongst residents in Great Britain—as apart from Greater Britain—that colonists, and especially those *born* in a colony, are people who, if not of a weaker mental type, are, from their surroundings, ignorant of many things pertaining to civilised life, and of the conventionalities so essential to the existence of the 'upper crust' of society.

These people forget that steam and electricity, the enormous circulation of all kinds of literary matter, the rapidity with which the cable transmits news to and from almost all parts of the earth, and a thousand other conveniences of modern life, all tend to bring the colonist into direct touch with matters taking place in the great centres of civilisation and progress. Doubtless, multitudes of Britishers have learned and are learning that we are becoming one great human family, even as the members of the human body are all essential the one to the other; but it only requires a few minutes' conversation with a 'new arrival' to find that he left his native land with a firm persuasion that he was about to come in contact with an inferior order of beings. Of course, locality, position in life, and surroundings (now known by the modern term of 'environment') have much to do with the formation of character and with the habits of the human race all the world over; but the Anglo-Saxon retains the stamp of the Englishman, wherever he dwells. The British colonies contain large numbers of continental Europeans and Americans, but substantially English habits and British modes of government, as well as the English tongue, prevail throughout.

The writer has frequently put the question to a person recently landed in a colony—'Well, is it anything like what you expected to find?' and the reply is almost always, 'Much better.' Some express astonishment that the English language is spoken, that the accent is pure, and the ideas those of educated people; that we sit down to table, and eat with knives, forks, and spoons; that an attentive coloured servant, dressed in snowy white, is at hand to change plates and remove courses; that the food is well cooked, and cleanliness prevails; that many unheard-of dishes are, on trial, found extremely palatable; that tropical fruits and vegetables are provided in profusion; and owing to contact with travellers, and especially with the ubiquitous 'Press,' conversation is carried on with animation—wit, repartee, and one anecdote following another. But perhaps nowhere is surprise more apparent—though many new arrivals in the colonies have the good taste and good sense to suppress it—than in the drawing-room. The colonial girls

are in many cases exceedingly good musicians, with well-trained voices, and the latest music is played with taste and without error. In the towns, churches, and schools, halls for theatrical, musical, and other entertainments are to be found, capable of accommodating future increases in the respective population. For instance, the Cape Town Houses of Parliament cost about a quarter of a million. At Port Elizabeth, Durban, and Maritzburg, the town-halls recently erected are more spacious and costly than in English towns whose population is ten, or perhaps twenty, times as numerous as in the colonial towns. Many of the public buildings in Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Christchurch (Canterbury, N.Z.), are magnificent pieces of architecture.

In the country colonial districts, much progress is visible, though vast tracts of land are still unoccupied, or at least are not yet made available by the labour of the agriculturist to one tithe of the land's capacity. The new-comer—we can scarcely call him an immigrant nowadays—is, perhaps, most pleased and gratified with the almost invariable kindness and hospitality which he receives from the farmers and settlers in the colonies. Even for the loafer class there is often an outhouse, as well as food, provided; but a respectable person is almost sure of a hospitable reception, whether from English, Irish, Scotch, or Scandinavian settler, wherever he may travel. And if the new-comer's intention be farming, he will do well to make careful observation of the methods pursued in the colony; for if he attempts methods of cultivation in the thirtieth parallel of latitude which he pursued in the fiftieth, he will assuredly come to grief. Loss and disaster will teach him that the 'colonial' idea, which at the time he pool-poohed, was the correct thing. Still, it must be admitted, large numbers of colonial farmers are behind the time in efficient and economical working of the land, especially in colonies where 'native' labour is largely employed. The tendency is—and the writer is sorry that the urgency of the case compels him to repeat it—to level down, rather than to insist on the best methods of cultivating the farm and caring for the live-stock. In social life, the Englishman abroad speedily accommodates himself to colonial customs, and the colonist in turn is benefited by his intercourse with folks fresh from the great centres of civilisation. The vast majority of immigrants *make their home* in the colonies, although nearly every one of them 'came out' with the *intention* of making a rapid fortune, and returning in a few years' time to 'Old England.' The 'few years' pass by, the 'fortune' is still to 'make,' but the settler is becoming accustomed to colonial life. He may be fortunate enough to be able to take a trip to his native land, but he *returns* to colonial life. The 'old country' conventionalisms and restraints are too much for one who has tasted the sweets of liberty; the climate is too rough; a living, indeed a competence, is easier made in the colony; the associations and family ties are continually deepening and strengthening in the colony; and thus 'Greater Britain' is populated, and a race of

true Britons, with British habits of industry, pluck, and perseverance, are 'subduing the earth,' and 'the desert rejoices and blossoms as the rose.' The rising generations grow up tall and athletic, sending from time to time crack teams of cricketers or riflemen to the old country; and better still, they send to the European colleges and seats of learning, youths who do credit to the education already imparted to them in colonial schools. Speaking about schools, the writer must be excused if he compares a *country* school in a colony with an English school, and gives the palm to the former. He will give one instance; and he has no hesitation in saying that the English school-children would vote for the *colony*—nay, even the parents would vote with them, on being guaranteed for their offspring a good sound education. The scene is laid in Griqualand East, a dependency of the Cape of Good Hope. The place, a country school-house, situate in a wide open plain, with 'bush' and 'dongas'* or gullies in the distance. The master receives a Government grant; the parents also pay him a small fee monthly. Number of pupils, eighteen; farms being three and six thousand acres each, and only very partially fenced. The boys and girls all come to school on ponies; these graze about until the joyful signal is given and the school is out. Saddles for *both* sexes consist generally of sheepskins, and bridle reins are probably made of 'reins'—that is, untanned strips of hide.

Time two p.m. There are always natives about who assist in catching and 'saddling up' the ponies. Ten or twelve of the youngsters have to travel in the same direction. Hurrah! now for a hurdle-race. There are two water-jumps on the homeward-bound 'course.' It is a grand helter-skelter. The ponies enter into the fun. Any youngster who quits his or her sheepskin, must catch the pony and scramble up as best they can. The winner is generally a *girl* who has taught her brothers to ride. These children would feel the restraints of English life terribly. The mothers in the old country lift their hands in horror, and exclaim, 'Surely these children will break their necks!' And what does this heathenish writer mean by 'water-jumps?' Bless your anxious hearts, the children are *not* hurt; they tumble on the turf quite comfortably; and those ponies that don't jump the brook, go through it. As to a wetting, that matters but little with a Griqualand temperature, and perhaps a thunder-storm gives them wetting No. 2. But these clever ponies can generally make the shelter before the storm overtakes them.

We are forgetting the Englishman abroad, in describing the colonist at home. Every day, every new steamship launched, every additional mile of cable laid, bring both nearer together. The young colonials of to-day listen with wonder to the true tales told by their grandparents, the pioneers. Where are the wild animals? Where are the huts, the shanties, the tumble-down dwellings of the past? Gone!

* A 'donga' is a chasm or gully: near one such the Prince Imperial of France was killed during the Zulu war.

Englishmen, Irishmen, Scotsmen, Welshmen, Germans, Dutch, French, Norwegians—all the civilised nations of Europe are bringing their energies to bear on new lands. Gold-fields have opened out the colonies during the last forty-five years in a wonderful manner. The 'Randt' in the Transvaal is eclipsing the far-famed Diamond-fields beyond the Orange River; and now that dry country, Western Australia, till of late one of the most unprogressive colonies, is year by year increasing its output of gold, and gold will construct their dams and waterworks. The sun never sets on British possessions, and work never ceases. What a pity it is that a certain proportion of the human race never will work! Hence the 'submerged tenth' and the 'slums,' with all their horrors; while the colonies of England provide bread for all, and work for the working man. 'Clerks and shopmen,' we repeat, can only obtain work in *limited* numbers; but men to handle pick and shovel, plane and chisel, trowel and forge, are always in demand. Unhappily, some of the older colonies already contain a pauper population, so surely do whisky and laziness produce their natural crop, 'want, vice, and misery.'

TOAD LORE.

ARE toads poisonous? This is a question which has caused much shedding of ink. The popular idea has always been that they are poisonous; but, on the other hand, this has often been denounced as a vulgar error. The Rev. Rowland Hill, who was fond of the creatures, and even started in his garden a place of abode and refuge for them, which he called a 'toadery,' declared that they were quite harmless, and indeed useful. 'They are even capable,' he says, 'of the knowledge of our attention and humanity. It is wanton cruelty to destroy them.' We may agree with the latter assertion, but it is more difficult to admit the truth of the former. Gilbert White of Selborne regarded the question as still in doubt, and remarked that it was strange that the matter with regard to the venom of toads had not yet been settled. Some animals were able to eat them with impunity, and, says the naturalist: 'I well remember the time, but was not an eyewitness to the fact (although numbers of persons were), when a quack at this village ate a toad, to make the country people stare; afterwards he drank oil.' If the feat were actually performed, the performer's experiences were probably more strange than pleasant. But, taking into consideration the facts that the story is given at second-hand, and that the hero thereof was a quack, it may not be unreasonable to come to the conclusion that a slight trick of legerdemain was performed, and that the toad was not consumed in the horrible manner described. At least, we may hope so, for the sake of the enterprising quack.

Goldsmith, in his *Animated Nature*, takes up the cudgels still more emphatically on behalf of the maligned toad. He declares that the stories of its possessing poison, and being able to eject its venom, are all fables, and roundly asserts that 'it is a harmless, defence-

less creature, torpid and unvenomous, and seeking the darkest retreats, not from the malignity of its nature, but the multitude of its enemies.' But notwithstanding these and other defences of the toad, there is really no doubt that popular prejudice is on the whole justified; for the toad does possess poison or venom, which, when it likes, it can eject, with very painful and sometimes fatal consequences to the animal or person upon whom it alights.

The 'vulgar error,' like most of its more genuine brethren, can lay claim to considerable antiquity. There are several allusions in Pliny to the poison of toads. Juvenal tells us, as translated by Dryden, of the lady

Who squeez'd a toad into her husband's wine,

with no friendly intentions towards her spouse; and similar testimony could be adduced from various other classic writers. In England the belief has been almost universally held, despite the scepticism of Sir Thomas Browne, Goldsmith, and a few other writers. The description of the toad by the duke, in *As You Like It*, as 'ugly and venomous,' exactly describes the general feeling towards the unfortunate reptile; although 'ugly,' according to some judges, is not strictly correct. Sir Thomas Browne wondered why a toad should be called ugly, while a writer in the *Lancet*, some years ago, declared that no creature on earth was in his opinion so perfectly beautiful as a toad, except a beautiful woman. Perhaps it was on æsthetic grounds that the toad was accorded divine honours by various tribes of South American Indians, in Guiana and on the banks of the Orinoco. However, its beauty is not precisely of a kind to take the ordinary eye; and the toad, having received a bad name, became a fair mark for uncomplimentary adjectives and attributes.

Spitefulness is an amiable trait with which it is generally credited, as in the absurd story of the centipede who was happy until the toad, in spite, asked which leg went after which, and after that the centipede never knew which to put first. In *Richard III.*, Crookback is styled by Queen Margaret—'that poisonous hunch-back'd toad.' 'Foul' is a common epithet. The animal was the first of the horrible ingredients which the witches in *Macbeth* threw into their devilish caldron:

Toad, that under coldest stone,
Days and nights hast thirty-one
Sweltered venom sleeping got,
Boil thou first i' the charmed pot!

And in another hellish mixture described in Middleton's *Witch*, we find mentioned, with other ingredients:

The juice of toad, the oil of adder,
Those will make the younker madder.

The creature was even supposed to be able to poison the plants among which it lurked. One of Boccaccio's tales turns on the supposition that a toad had poisoned, by its venom, a cluster of sage plants, which became the cause of death to human beings. The life of James VI. of Scotland was once attempted by a woman named Agnes Sampson, who confessed, on her trial, that in order to compass the

king's death, she had hung up a black toad for nine days, and collected the juice that fell from it. If she had been able to procure a piece of the king's linen, she declared that she would have killed him with this venom, 'causing him such extraordinarie paines as if he had bene lying upon sharp thornes, or endis of needles.'

Dekker, an Elizabethan writer, writes of the jaws of a toad 'sweating and foaming out poison;' but this is quite as incorrect as the common notion, which exists all over the country at the present time, that the toad, when maltreated or disturbed in its lurking-place, *spits* out venom upon its assailants. The toad's 'poison' is a white, highly-acid fluid, which is secreted by the glands of the skin of its back; and through two small eminences just behind its head (not from its mouth), the animal can eject the venom. This white fluid is alluded to in the Galloway ballad of 'Robin a Rie:'

The milk on the Taed's back I wad prefer
To the poisons in his words that be.

The secretion, no doubt, helps to protect the toad from many of its natural enemies—birds, lizards, and so forth, but not from all; both hedgehogs and snakes devour toads with impunity. A dog will always refuse to take a toad into its mouth, because the secretion from the creature's glands burns its mouth and lips. If the venom be injected beneath the skin of a dog, it will cause great local inflammation, with repeated vomiting and convulsions, which sometimes end in death.

The effect of the poison on human beings is much the same. Frank Buckland has a story, related to him by an Oxfordshire surgeon, of a man who once made a wager, when half drunk in a village ale-house, that he would bite a toad's head off. He performed the feat, but soon his lips, tongue, and throat began to swell most alarmingly, and he was for some time dangerously ill. 'He had probably bitten,' says Mr Buckland, 'right through the centre of the glands behind the head, and had got a dose of the poison.' This genuine and painful experience of the tipsy braggart may serve to increase our scepticism as to the quack's performance, as reported by Gilbert White.

In the Life of Pope Leo IX., who flourished about the middle of the eleventh century, there is related a curious incident, about certain parts of which some may be sceptical, but which is worth relating in this connection. The future Pope, when a boy at school, is said to have gone to visit his parents on one occasion, when, during his sleep, a toad climbed on his face, sucked his breath, and injected its venom into his mouth. In the morning the boy's face, throat, and breast were extraordinarily swollen. Remedies seemed unavailing, and for two months the child was most dangerously ill. Then, suddenly, St Benedict appeared to him, holding a crucifix, with which he touched the parts affected by the poison. As soon as this was done the swellings began to diminish, and the pain to decrease. In a few days large quantities of bad matter were discharged from gatherings behind the ears, and in a comparatively short space of time, the boy was com-

pletely restored to health. Such is the history, or legend, of St Leo IX. and the toad.

Another old-world belief about toads, which is altogether fabulous, is mentioned in the well-known passage of *As You Like It* already alluded to:

Sweet are the uses of adversity,
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head.

The toadstone was greatly valued of old as a bringer of good luck, and as a precious charm or amulet against a great variety of diseases. It was frequently set in valuable rings, which were handed down from one owner to another as precious heirlooms. Some toadstones are said to have borne a figure resembling a toad on their surface. They varied in colour; some were dark gray, others of a brownish fawn colour. These stones were supposed to grow only in very old toads, and to be extracted as the animal was dying, although an old writer declares that the toad voided the stone when placed on a red cloth. In reality, this precious charm was made of borax and a variety of other materials.

In the *Transactions* of the Royal Society, there is a letter, dated December 17, 1699, from a Mr Edward Llwyd, some time keeper of the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, describing a variety of amulets then used in Scotland. Among these is the toadstone, which, he says, 'is some pebble remarkable for its shape and sometimes variety of colours. This is presumed to prevent the burning of a house, and the sinking of a boat; and if a commander in the field has one of them about him, he will either be sure to win the day, or all his men shall fairly dye on spot.' Truly a potent charm! But its value was greatest medicinally. It was especially powerful against witchcraft and poison. When placed in proximity to the latter, or when applied to one bewitched, the stone was believed to sweat, and to change colour. It was sometimes applied internally, being swallowed as a remedy for fever or the bite of reptiles. The old notion was that nature provided bane and antidote together. The toad contained poison, for which the stone supposed to be in its head was the antidote; as an Elizabethan writer, Robert Greene, says: 'For experience teacheth me that the fairer the stone is in the Toades head, the more pestilent is the poison in his bowels.' It is evident that not even the teachings of experience can be trusted in a superstitious age.

The virtues of the stone were shared by the toad, for the creature itself was considered of great medicinal efficacy in a variety of ways. It was applied both internally and externally. Powdered toad was an excellent remedy for the plague and for smallpox. Among the papers of Aubrey, the antiquary, now in the custody of the Royal Society, there is an elaborate description of the method of preparing the powder. The horrible process begins with the slow stewing of twenty 'great fatt toades,' placed alive in a pipkin on the fire. The calcined remains are again heated, and, afterwards, the white powder is beaten still finer, when it is to be kept in a glass ready for use. The

general use of the powder is vouched for by Sir Kenelm Digby. 'In times of common contagion,' he writes, 'they use to carry about them the powder of a toad, and sometimes a living toad or spider shut up in a box; or else they carry Arsnick, or some other venomous substance, which draws into it the contagious air, which otherwise would infect the party.' Powdered toad was also administered in cases of dropsy and smallpox.

There is a mysterious connection between toads and warts. This is known across the Atlantic, where, in New England, they say that one who kills a toad will have as many warts as the victim has spots. Toads are used for the cure of warts by American boys, who operate by rubbing the troublesome excrescences against one of the unfortunate reptiles impaled on a sharp stick. Live toads, or their limbs, confined in a bag worn round the neck, as described by Sir Kenelm Digby, were good for quinsy, would stop bleeding at the nose, and, above all, were a most valuable remedy for king's evil or scrofula. A belief in the efficacy of a live toad in cases of scrofula is still widely held in the west of England. Not many years ago, a certain 'cunning man' used to hold an annual gathering at Stalbridge, in Dorsetshire, which was locally known as 'Toad Fair,' because the quack sold, at no cheap rate, legs torn from the bodies of living toads, which, when placed in bags and worn round the neck, were reckoned as sovereign remedies for scrofula, and for those who had been 'overlooked' or bewitched. These 'toad-doctors' used to travel about the country dispensing these abominable and cruelly obtained remedies to the credulous sufferers from 'king's evil.' Seven shillings was a common price asked for a bag containing one of these limbs, a price that must have been very profitable to the 'doctor.'

A less cruel method sometimes adopted by the scrofulous or those suffering from glandular swellings, was to enclose a live toad in a bag, and hang it up in a room, in the faith that as the toad died and wasted away, so the disease would depart or the swelling be reduced. This, however, must have required an unusual degree of faith, for the toad might continue alive in its bag for quite an unconscionable time, without a thought of dying to oblige the sufferer. There are many stories told of toads having been found alive at great depths in the earth, enclosed in blocks of coal, or in the solid stone, where, according to some legends, they must have remained without light or air for countless ages. But although many of these stories are somewhat mythical, it is an undoubted fact that the toad can sustain life for considerable periods without access to air. Experiments have been made with toads by enclosing them in boxes which, again, were encased in thick mortar or other material which effectually excluded all air; and, after many months, when the mortar has been broken away, and the boxes opened, the toads have been found within, still alive, and apparently little the worse for their prolonged incarceration.

One undoubted 'vulgar error' about the toad may be mentioned in conclusion; and that is the old belief that there are no toads in Ireland.

It was said that when St Patrick cleared the Emerald Isle of snakes, he also banished for ever all toads. Shakespeare makes Richard II. allude to the belief in the lines:

Now for our Irish wars:

We must supplant those rough rug-headed kerns,
Which live like venom where no venom else
But only they have privilege to live.

But despite this poetic endorsement of St Patrick's claim, the story or belief must be classed as a vulgar error, for in many parts of Ireland toads are to be met with, just as in other countries with patron saints of less anti-reptilian reputation.

AH! ME, 'TIS WINTER YET.

I know a time shall be,
When, from each slumbering bough,
Shall flash on you and me
The beautiful young leaves,
Like glimmering emeralds set
In April's coronet:
When the warm south wind shall sigh,
And, to the silent eaves
The twittering martlets cling,
With tidings of the Spring.
Ah! me, 'tis Winter yet.

I know a time shall be,
When, for our sweet delight,
The pretty pageantry
Of April shall unfold;
The herald violet,
With purple banneret;
Gay king-cups, bravely dight
In shining cloth of gold;
And, dancing in the breeze.
Virgin anemones.
Ah! me, 'tis Winter yet.

I know a time shall be,
When, on my longing ear,
Your voice, a melody
Of silver strings, shall sound,
And charm away the fret
Your absence doth beget;
When Love shall cast out fear,
In chains eternal bound,
And, coming to his own,
Raise in our hearts his throne.
Ah! me, 'tis Winter yet.

I know a time shall be,
When all, save Love, shall fail;
That dim futurity
When we, dear heart, must stand
Where life and death are met.
May there be no regret
As, down the stream, we sail
Toward the shadowy land
Where, crowned with asphodels,
Spring-time for ever dwells.
Ah! me, 'tis Winter yet.

OLIVER GREY.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 637.—VOL. XIII.

SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

THE ETHICS OF INDIFFERENCE.

OF all nursery heroes surely he that 'broke the pitcher, and was neither glad nor sorry' for having done so, most captivates attention by the mystery of his indifference. Was his superiority to joy or sorrow the outcome of incipient heroism? Was it admirable or shameful? The result of fortitude or apathy? Was the pitcher a daily burden, heavy when empty, intolerable when full, that natural relief at its destruction neutralised natural regret? Was it so ugly or so damaged an amphora as to have justly offended an embryo æsthetic mind, and rendered it callous even to remorse? Was it the royalty of an inward happiness that lifted the youth above a carking care for a paltry pipkin? Or—dreadful thought—was he a relative, as nursery kinship goes, to that other who, because he 'didn't care,' came, and comes, finally to so bad an end?

There is a suspicious resemblance indicative of consanguinity. To rise superior to fate, to accident—though subject to the one, and having just met with the other (that is, supposing the pipkin to have come fairly accidentally to potsherds)—to be open to blame, to have earned a scolding, and perhaps a scourging, and yet to be neither glad nor sorry! In such calm lies the germ of a future possible hero. With a like indifference, real or feigned, did Achilles shut himself up in his tent while, in consequence of his abstention, 'woes unnumbered' afflicted his brethren of the Greek host; with even a more joyous indifference did Nero fiddle an answer to the burning Roman question of his day and hour. If the pitcher-boy and the original 'Don't Care' were not identical, and their histories, two legends of one and the same demi-god, as it were, then it is presumable that, 'to make a third,' Nature 'joined the former two' in the person of a boy of tender years, who, being admonished as to his probable end, replied with the philosophy of a Toots, that 'it was of no consequence,' for 'if Don't Care *was* hanged, it didn't matter, for *he*

didn't care, any more than *he* did!' With such armour-plated invulnerability as this, argument is impotent. Is it the inherited memory of generations of brave men, or the blue blood into which a drop of that mysterious lymph, that divine ichor of freedom for ever from care, has entered, and is circulating so triumphantly through his childish veins, that he *can't* care?

The acquired indifference that could permit a man of Sir Thomas More's wisdom to jest whimsically, with his beard on the block, is as far removed from the callousness of a highwayman 'dying game,' as it is from that indifference which is the offspring of dullness. Here a good digestion, and little or no imagination, enable a man to pass through troubles, almost scathless, that would sink a more sensitive or irritable nature into a slough of despair. And when he thinks, good easy man, full surely his fortune is a-ripening, and wakes one morning to find his affairs all at sixes and sevens, why, he resigns himself to his want of success with masterly indifference. By so doing he avoids chagrin, if he loses dignity and happiness. He will never be a martyr to cat-killing care. He breaks misfortune with superior force—the force of apathy. Care is no cure, he sagely remarks, so he goes comfortably to bed and to sleep, for the care that works at night labours to no purpose; so he refuses to let so corrosive a sublimate make *his* eyelids smart.

Yet it is undoubtedly better to incur ridicule for too anxious a care, than to be ruined for the want of it. Not to rank one's self with the barbarous multitude to care for this or that, is good; not to be a pipe for Fortune to play what tune she pleases on, is better; but indifference presents a poor picture when, in Spenser's words, 'Rude was his garment and to rags all rent, Ne better had he, *ne for better cared.*' To be able to assume indifference, to wrap ourselves in it as the dying Cæsar wrapped himself in his mantle, as the even more bitterly anguished Virginus hid his face in the corner of his gown to be shaken within, yet show no outward sign

of tribulation, was a Roman virtue, and well worthy of the name. Although nowadays we are happily not often called upon either to enact or witness such heroic self-mastery as these, there are still many lighter occasions, when it is a good thing to slip into the toga of indifference. Circumstances either irritating or ludicrous, or both, are apt to overtake us when least expected.

Not long since, a lady, sketching in a quiet corner of a French provincial town, displayed under provocation a sang-froid that filled at least one observer with envious admiration. Gradually there had gathered round her all the idle gamins of the place. From merely crowding round her, sniffing—it is imperative on a watching boy to sniff—and commenting aloud on her and her work, one, the boldest, constituting himself her gamin-in-chief, began coolly picking from her dress and bonnet certain little green caterpillars, which fell pretty continuously from the sycamore beneath which she sat, presenting each one for her inspection, with, 'Une autre petite bête, madame,' while he winked aside to his companions. Madame continued her work with an indifference more apparent, perhaps, than real, when, fortunately for her, a baker opposite, kneading bread, or rather dough in a cellar, with his feet, caught sight through a grating of this petty persecution going on before his eyes. To seize a whip, and spring naked-footed into the middle of the road, and crack that whip as only a Frenchman can, was the work of an instant; the members of the inquisition, including the grand inquisitor, fled, howling, and Madame's indifference melted into a smile, as she exchanged bows with the retiring Frenchman.

Infectious as is fear, it is scarcely more so than courage. Many a panic has been stayed and lives saved by one brave man who scorned not death, but the fear of it. In like manner the gravity, not to say severity, of one in authority has been known to stiffen to the decorous performance of their parts a score of people under novel and incongruous circumstances. In a certain old edifice, on a certain occasion, the bag, plate, or toll-dish, was missing. A consultation, *sotto voce*, between the collector and his chief concluded by the latter handing the former a large brown leather folio, and bidding him, audibly, 'Collect on that.' He did so, and with such immovable composure, that from the first depositor, an elderly maiden lady, who laid a reluctant—sticking to her cloth glove—threepenny bit, like an oasis in the middle of the brown leather desert, to the last, a bashful countryman, who twice dropped his penny before it would consent to settle, nothing but a preternatural solemnity marked the method of collecting as out of the common course of levying.

Comparing notes afterwards, the company confessed, each, his inward terror, as that brown sloping substitute approached him in its rounds,

lest his treacherous coin, or no less treacherous self-control, might play him a trick at the last moment, and cover him with confusion. But it was the imposing unconcern of the principal actor that, like the Marquis of Steyne's carriage at Becky's door, 'kep us up,' and carried the company triumphantly through the ordeal. Among many kinds of indifference, two are chiefly practised, not merely on the great world's stage, but on those small stages where actors most do congregate—a smiling indifference, and a stony one. The comic actor naturally adopts the first, and by his careless, don't-mention-it, daffing aside of the applause, as it were, commonly earns another round; while the tragedian, his stern, indifferent gaze fixed immovably on vacancy, does his best to extinguish the enthusiasm he has worked so hard to kindle, and succeeds.

To manifest indifference to injuries no doubt argues greatness of mind; to be careful not to avenge one's self is due to the wrong-doer. But indifference should not lead a man to forget that he has been wronged: this he owes to himself. Indifference may be, according to circumstances, either a precious anodyne, or a pernicious poison. In certain troubles, such as fall to the lot of most men, at some period of their lives, such as a disastrous lawsuit, an irreparable loss, or losses, ill-conducted relatives, or disease, one may, by exercising a cultivated indifference, prevent the misfortune, whatever it may be, from pressing too fatally on the recollection. When a man has wrung from a certain trouble all the instruction, the experience, the warning—in a word, all the *good* it will yield him, he will do well to cast the grief substantially behind him, and have done with it. An error of judgment, a mistake, may also wisely be so treated; but a fault, or still less a crime—never; unless the fault, the crime, be due to ignorance. In this case the recollection of the offence may be banished by adroitly fixing the attention on something else, when it invades the memory. We have far more power over our minds than we are willing to concede, because to exert the capacity is irksome. 'Sure we cannot help our thoughts,' is often affirmed. But if we cannot, we are in a poor case.

The art, like other arts, is to be acquired, and though difficult, especially at the beginning, the effort soon yields a rich return. A man's mind may be a kingdom—nay, is; but often a very unruly, because ill-ruled one. Of what benefit is a realm always or often in rebellion? Indulged thoughts, like petted children, are apt to grow self-willed and masterful. That way lies madness; unless indeed the thoughts are of a sanity and sweet reasonableness beyond the common session of silent thinkings. Even dreams are far more amenable to the *habit* of mind of the dreamer, than is dreamt of in his philosophy perhaps.

Indifference has been spoken of above as a precious anodyne and a no less pernicious poison, according as its virtues are legitimately or illegitimately applied. Before taking a physical anodyne—an opiate—we are accustomed to take the advice of a physician; that is, if we wish for a cure, and not a mere momentary relief from pain. And, lest we encourage and nurse

forgetfulness of that which should not be treated with indifference, it were well to refer the case to the Great Physician of souls, or at least to consult His manual.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

CHAPTER IX.—THE PHYSICIAN.

WHEN we assembled for early dinner on Monday, I looked to see some effect of our little Saturday voyage and talk on Isabel. Alas! the cloud hung again over her head: a visible, dark cloud. She sat timidly glancing at her lover, who was also her liege and lord; more timidly, perhaps, because Robert had now begun to put off his silent habit and to talk at dinner—one result of his West-End experience.

For my own part, the talk of Saturday afternoon and the revelation of the girl's unhappiness so mightily impressed me—one can never bear to see a girl in sorrow—that I had been thinking ever since how Isabel's life might be bettered for her. I could only think of two ways: first to lighten her work, and next to introduce a little change. As for the former, she was housekeeper, and kept the household accounts, which was enough for one girl to attempt: also, she was accountant to 'Burnikel and Burnikel,' and kept the books of the house and paid the men. Keeping the books meant a laborious and old-fashioned system of double book-keeping, which took a great deal of her time. This alone was enough for one girl to attempt. She was, further, private secretary: she hunted up passages, copied passages, made notes, and wrote all Robert's letters. This alone was quite enough for one girl to attempt: and lastly, she had to look after her own dress; and I am sure that this is quite enough to occupy all the time of a conscientious girl. As regards getting some change of scene, the only way was to bring the change to her. And that, I saw clearly, must be my task.

It is a delicate thing to interfere between a man and his mistress, even when the mistress is not the object of any fondling and nonsense: even when she is also accountant, secretary, and housekeeper. I therefore approached the subject diplomatically.

'Boat-building,' I said, working round to it by an unexpected path, 'is a business of selling as well as of making, isn't it?'

'Go on,' he replied cheerfully; 'what are you driving at?'

'This, first. I am getting on very well with the craft, but I don't know much about the trade.'

'You know very little about the trade; and I fear you never will. Because George, though you may make me a gentleman—to look at—one will ever make you a tradesman.'

'Why not?'

'Because you've been brought up different. You haven't our feeling for money. Every coin with us means money saved or money won. A sovereign means victory in a pitched battle. With you it comes out of an inexhaustible bag. See now. If you want to go any-

where, you take a cab. It comes natural to you. Lord! I laugh when I see you calling a cab. We take a penny bus. If we must take a cab we give him a shilling, reckoning up the fare and measuring the distance; we grudge that shilling. You toss him half-a-crown, and think nothing of it. You tip waiters and porters with sixpences and shillings; we never tip anybody at all if we can help it. When you want to have anything, you order it without asking the price; we cast about to get it cheap, or we do without it.'

'My dear cousin, the period approaches when I shall have nothing but pence to study. However, what I wanted to say was this. The time seems to have come when I ought to learn something of the trade side.'

'Well, I will tell you what you please.'

'There are the prices of materials, the cost of labour, rent, taxes, selling prices—all these things. The best way for me to learn is not to worry you, but to read and examine your books. Everything is there, of course.'

Robert did not reply for a few moments. It is the instinct of a man of business to wish his affairs to loom large in the imagination of humanity. His books alone conceal the real truth.

'If it was any other man,' he said, 'or for any other purpose—but as it's you—take the books and examine them. They are in the safe over the way. Isabel has the key.'

'Thank you. With her help I will not only look at them, but, for a term, keep them for you.'

'You can't keep them. You don't know book-keeping by double entry.'

'Isabel shall teach me, and your books cannot be very complicated.'

'Very well. Have it your own way.'

So that was done. I could thus take a great load off the girl's frail shoulders. Then I went on to the other points.

'Isabel,' I said, 'is not looking well.'

'She looks exactly the same to-day as she did six months ago.'

'No: she is not looking at all well. She is not, naturally, I should say, a strong girl. If I were you, Robert, I would speak to some one about her.'

'Why?' he answered impatiently. 'She hasn't told me she was ill. What is the matter with her?'

'Too much confinement. Too little change.'

'I've noticed nothing wrong.'

'No. You see her every day. You would hardly notice a gradual change. Can't you see, however, that she is pale and nervous?'

'She is always pale and nervous. Is she more pale and nervous than usual?'

'There is a furrow in her forehead: there are black lines under her eyes: and her cheek is thin.'

'This,' said the fond, but injured, lover, 'comes of having women about one. Why can't she tell me if she is not well?'

'You must have noticed how silent she is—and how she droops her head.'

'She is always silent. She knows that I don't like chatter. As for drooping her head, I suppose she carries her head as she likes.'

'No doubt. At the same time, Robert, she is in a bad way. I am certain of it.'

'Well'—he hesitated. 'What am I to do? Look here, George, you know more than I do about women. It's no use talking to the Captain, and there's only the cook besides. What am I to do?'

'I should say—give her first, more fresh air—less work—more amusement—change of scene.'

'Good Lord! man! how am I to give her change of scene? You don't mean that I am to give up my work, just now—when the election may be sprung upon us at any moment, in order to go dawdling and dangling about with a woman?'

'Well—I'll help a bit—if you agree.'

'Agree? I should think I would agree! Go on.'

'I was thinking—if you don't mind—that I could take her out occasionally—on Saturdays or Sundays—and perhaps in the long evenings.'

'If you would, and if it would do her any good. I don't want to be hard on the girl, George. You know how busy I am, and what a lot I have to think about. She's a good and obedient girl on the whole. I can't, you see, be worrying myself continually about the day-by-day looks of my clerks and people.'

'Isabel is hardly a "clerk and people," is she?'

'Of course not. But you know what I mean.'

'I believe I know what you mean. Your thoughts are always concerned with things that seem to you of far more importance than a woman's health.'

'That is so,' he replied, impervious to the shaft of satire.

'Well, Robert, I will do what I can. While we are talking about Isabel, there is another thing on my mind. When you are a great man—a man of society—it will be a matter of some importance that your wife should hold her own in society.'

Robert coloured. 'Why shouldn't Isabel hold her own? A woman has got nothing to do but to sit down and take what comes.'

'There are many ways of sitting down.'

'You mean, I suppose, that her case is—like my own. Do you want to send Isabel into Piccadilly to learn manners?'

'Her case is not so bad as yours,' I told him plainly. 'But it is a case of the same kind.'

'I always thought she was a quiet, modest kind of girl. Else, I could never have promised to marry her. But I daresay you are right. After my own experiences—I am a good bit wiser than I was—I suppose that there are ways and customs that a woman should know—that can't be learned in this corner of the world.'

'She wants manner—that is the only thing she wants, except happiness, perhaps—I cannot impart manner to her, but I can show her women who have it.'

I knew, of course, while I spoke, that to acquire that manner was impossible. A girl brought up as Isabel had been, could never acquire the real air and manner which belongs to the gentleman born and bred. All kinds of virtues, graces, charms, attractions, allurements, arts, and accomplishments, may be acquired by a woman; but this one quality she inherits or develops from infancy. Not that it is a charm

above all others, as some women fondly believe. By no means. For my own part I have learned that a woman may lack this charm as she may lack other things, and yet be above and beyond all other women in the world in the eyes of her lover.

'I suppose,' said Robert grudgingly, 'that you are right.'

'Very good. Then I will sometimes take her where she will see well-dressed women. You shall see, after a bit, how her pale cheeks will put on roses and her listless manner will become cheerful. Oh! and there is something else. She must practise her music more—she is starved for want of music. She must practise in the daytime. Perhaps she might sing a little. It won't disturb you.'

'All right,' he said, 'all right. Have it your own way. Perhaps you'd like the workmen over the way to sing a chorus while she strums the piano. Perhaps you'd like me to do a breakdown in the road. Only make her get well, George, without troubling me. And don't look as if it's my fault that she's a bit pale.'

That day, after dinner, Robert went his way as usual. The Captain went another way. Isabel, the cloth being removed, spread out her books upon the table, and sat down with a little sigh.

I sat down on the other side leaning my elbows on the table.

'Isabel,' I said, 'you've got to be obedient to your physician.'

'I must go on with my master's work, please, physician. When that is done I will be obedient.'

I took the books from her, shut them up, and put my hand upon them. 'There!' I said. 'Now you are not going to trouble yourself about these books any more. Thus saith the healer.'

'What do you mean?'

'I have spoken to the Commander-in-Chief. He graciously consents that I shall take over these books for the future. You are released. He thinks further that if you housekeep with diligence, and look after your dress with zeal, and make yourself look pretty and desirable, you will have quite enough to do.'

She blushed a rosy red. 'Robert didn't say that! Oh! Impossible!'

'He didn't exactly say so—in so many words'—in fact, it was impossible—but I have no doubt that he really meant it.'

'It was you who said it, and meant it, too,' she murmured.

'The Commander-in-Chief further expresses his desire that you should practise your playing all day long, if you like, and your singing too, if you can sing. Nothing is better for the chest than singing.'

'I have never learned. I only sing in church.'

'I will get you some songs and some new music—plenty of music, that is my first prescription. Plenty of singing, that is the second prescription; laughing, if you can find anything to laugh at. You can laugh at me, if you like—I wish you would; you can't believe the good it would do you. Dancing, if there is any one to dance with; you can dance with

me, if you like—I wish you would. Flowers for the windows, and to brighten up this old house. Change of air and of scene; you shall go with me somewhere next Saturday.'

She stared in amazement. 'What does all this mean?' she asked.

'It means, Isabel, that Robert is seriously concerned about your looks, and it means that we have considered together what to do with you, and that these are the measures we have adopted.'

'Robert seriously concerned about me? Robert anxious about my looks?'

She covered her face with her hands to hide the tears that arose. 'It would matter nothing to Robert if I were dying. He would notice nothing, and he would care nothing. I belong to him, that is all, so does his chair. Oh! It is you, you who have done this. It is all your kindness—yours—and I am almost a stranger to you. And Robert, who is to be my husband, has never all the time said one word of kindness—not one word of kindness. And as to'—She stopped, with sobbing.

'Nay, Isabel. Take all this as an act of kindness. It is not his way to say words of affection.'

She shook her head. 'Not one word of kindness. Robert cares nothing for me—nothing.'

'And you?'

'Oh! I tremble day and night to think that I must marry him. George, you asked me for my secret. That is my secret. If I could go away anywhere, to be a housemaid even, I would go. But I cannot—I cannot—and he will never give me up unless— Oh! I pray night and morning that he may find another woman, and fall in love with her. But he will not—oh! he cannot; he does not know what love means—his heart is as hard as stone, and he thinks of nothing but himself.'

'I will keep your secret, Isabel,' I replied, gravely. 'Let us never speak of it again. And perhaps, when he gets on in the world, he will soften.'

She shook her head again.

'Play me something, my child, and soothe your own soul.'

MODERN GUNPOWDER AND ITS DEVELOPMENT.

DURING the latter half of this century the weapons of warfare have undergone enormous changes. Our guns attain to a size and precision previously unthought of; and the accuracy with which a heavy projectile may be driven to a distance of several miles is one of the great triumphs of this century of science. Yet the propelling agent used when field-pieces first figured in warfare—at Crécy in 1346—is still in our midst; and, indeed, until recent years had no rival. Further, from that time until recently the gunpowder used in all weapons remained of practically the same composition—namely, a more or less intimate mixture of seventy-five per cent. of nitre, fifteen per cent. of charcoal, and ten per cent. of sulphur.

The cause of the longevity of the old type of gunpowder is not far to seek. In times when complete accuracy of firing was neither sought nor desired, and when the projectiles employed were much less than at present, an explosive of the composition given fulfilled all the requirements of warfare. It was safe to transport; could be relied upon to ignite; and gave a large propulsive force; and such being the case, there is no cause to wonder that a mixture so satisfactory should have survived so long. It was only when the large charges requisite to fire the steel monsters of to-day were employed that the ancient mixture was found to possess objectionable features; and these, after many experiments, have been eliminated one by one, culminating in the several types of powder at present used in our army and navy.

When larger guns were first constructed, requiring a larger charge of powder, a serious drawback was experienced. It was found that after firing a few shots from them the firing-chamber was badly damaged, being in some cases cracked. Additional thickness of material in this part of the gun proved only a temporary remedy, as the violence of the explosion bodily removed layer after layer of the inner surface. Here was a serious problem; and steps were immediately taken to investigate the cause of this local rupture. It was soon discovered that the evil was due to the too rapid burning of the powder, which, being converted almost instantaneously into gas, exerted an enormous pressure in the firing chamber before the bullet had commenced its motion down the barrel. As the pressure is proportionate to the amount of powder used, that produced by a small charge would not be sufficient to give rise to these destructive results.

A simple experiment will illustrate this disruptive action. If a sheet of stiff paper be held between the fingers and gradually approached with a sharp penknife, the paper will be pushed forward without being penetrated. If, however, the knife be suddenly brought to the paper, the latter will be pierced. We have here all the difference between a sustained and a sudden pressure, and a complete resemblance to the action in a gun. If the pressure be slowly and steadily generated, the bullet will move forward; if sudden, a tendency to rupture will be inevitable, and bursting must ensue if the pressure be sufficiently great.

Steps were therefore taken to overcome this difficulty, and various devices were tried to make the powder burn more slowly, and thus produce a more gradual pressure. The first remedy which naturally suggested itself was to compress the powder; for, as is generally known, a compressed substance burns much more slowly than a porous one under ordinary conditions. Accordingly the powder was strongly compressed into cubical blocks, varying in size from one half inch to four inches, according to the purpose for which it was to be used: the largest blocks being used for the largest guns. The compressed powder was then put to the trial,

and signally failed to fulfil the purpose for which it was intended. Not only was the damage to the firing chamber practically undiminished, but in the case of the largest blocks quantities of unburnt powder were shot out with the bullet and scattered in all directions, rendering the firing of the gun an extremely dangerous matter for the gunner. Such was the state of affairs at the time of the American civil war, and it was during the progress of that war that the shape of the blocks now universally adopted was devised—by whom is not known. Blocks hexagonal in shape, and having a hole through the centre, were made whereby it was ensured that the powder should burn from the interior at the same time combustion was taking place at the exterior. In addition, the blocks were compressed by a sudden blow from a cam machine, so as to make the outside portions more dense than the inside, as is the case with an ordinary stamped coin. Thus although the combustion took longer to reach the internal portions of the block, yet the quicker rate of burning of the less compressed part would ensure that the whole would be completely burned. No unburnt cores followed the bullet when this form of block was used, and its adoption in small guns proved a complete success. But when large charges were used the hexagonal block gave no better results than its predecessors; the damage to the firing chamber was still undiminished, and the problem of producing a slow-burning powder remained still unsolved.

The question now arose: Why should compression fail to produce the desired result? A consideration of the conditions existing in the firing chamber of a gun furnish an answer to this question. As soon as the powder is ignited, an enormous quantity of gas at a white heat and great pressure is produced. Any mechanical mixture would be permeated by this gas as if it were a sieve; and thus no amount of mechanical compression could prevent the mass of the gunpowder from being ignited in an extremely small space of time. The only barrier to such permeation would be for the particles to be only separated by a molecular distance. It thus became evident that attention must be directed to the composition of the powder; and the problem thus passed from the hands of the engineer to those of the chemist. It remained for the latter to provide a powder which fulfilled the required conditions; and the result is seen in the powders in use to-day, which stand as examples of how a proper application of scientific principles may overcome apparently insurmountable difficulties.

In seeking to modify the ingredients so as to produce a slow-burning powder, the first question presenting itself was: What are the parts played by each constituent? This had many years previously been made the subject of investigation by chemists, and it was well known that the nitre (saltpetre) furnished oxygen for the combustion of the charcoal, the pressure produced being due to the gases formed by this combustion; whilst the function of the sulphur was to spread the flame. It therefore appeared that the real remedy was to diminish the percentage of sulphur, whereby the tendency

of the flame to spread would be lessened. As previously stated the ordinary gunpowder contained ten per cent. of sulphur; and on this percentage being reduced to between two and four, it was found that a powder could be produced which burned considerably slower than the ordinary type. Indeed, a powder having this composition is still in use for moderately large guns, and gives excellent results. But in the case of the largest guns even this powder caused considerable damage to the firing chamber, and the complete solution had not yet been arrived at.

As no efficient substitute for the nitre was known, attention was in consequence directed to the charcoal. It was thought that if in addition to diminishing the quantity of sulphur, some slowly burning substitute for charcoal could be found, the problem would be solved. Trials were therefore made with powders in which the charcoal was replaced by partially charred wood fibres, which were in the main highly dried cellulose. The trials were a complete success from the beginning, and the 'brown powders' in use to-day are the results of these experiments. These powders owe their brown colour to the fact that the wood is only slightly charred before being ground and incorporated with the other constituents. If completely charred the colour would of course be black.

Two chief varieties of these brown powders are now made, and are known as 'Slow-burning cocoa'—from the fact that cocoa-nut fibres were first employed in the experiments—and 'Prism brown I.' The former contains about four per cent. of sulphur, and burns rather more rapidly than the latter, which contains only two per cent. Baked straw is the material now used to supplant the charcoal, as it provides a form of cellulose which may be readily reduced to a fine state of division. The shape is still the perforated hexagonal prism introduced in America.

The burning of these powders is steady and the increase of pressure gradual, attaining a maximum when the bullet is about half-way down the barrel of the gun. The damage inflicted on the firing chamber is very slight; perhaps as slight as ever will be obtained with such large charges of powder.

Uniformity of velocity is secured by ensuring that in the making, the proportions employed shall be accurate and the mixing complete. The prisms of any given class of powder are made exactly the same in weight and composition, and in consequence, a charge composed of a given number of prisms will give in every case almost exactly the same propelling force. It is thus that fine-aiming adjustments are made possible, as two consecutive bullets of the same weight may be propelled almost exactly the same distance—varying only a few yards in a range of several miles—by equal weights of powder of uniform composition.

We thus see how enormous projectiles may be fired with safety and precision, as the result of careful deductions from known scientific facts. Amongst all the improvements made by science in this nineteenth century of ours, that made in the direction of a proper understanding of explosive bodies is by no means the

least; and the gunpowders of to-day form notable examples of what may be achieved by the application of diligent and careful scientific reasoning.

BILLY BINKS—HERO.

CHAPTER II.

WHEN we reached the house again, I took him to the kitchen and surrendered Billy to the care of our cook—an Irishwoman of very marked character. She promised to look after him, and leaving him in her hands, I sought my wife. Somehow I had taken a great fancy to the little Ishmael, who was as sharp as a weazel, and as lawless as a fox cub. I had my own ideas as to what I would do with him when he grew a bit bigger.

One evening about a week later, I went round to the kitchen after dinner to investigate a complaint preferred against him.

'Well, Mrs Flannigan,' I said, as I entered her comfortable abode. 'What is this I hear about Billy?'

Mrs Flannigan crossed her arms upon her ample bosom, looked hard at me, and as I realised, to my horror, had prepared herself for a lengthy speech.

'Bedad, sir,' she began immediately, 'he's not a boy at all at all. He's a little wild animal, that's fwat he is, sir, as sure as you're born. He eats his victuals like a dog, an' he swears fit to turn an honest woman's stomach sick, to say nothin' of them dirty poipes he's always smokin'. Now he's been and thrashed Mrs Barner's boy till he can't see out o' his eyes, an' all about a bit of old green hide rope not worth lookin' at.'

'Never mind that,' I answered promptly, remembering the good woman's little peculiarities. 'Barner's boy is a year older, and two inches taller, and ought to be able to take care of himself. Come, come, Mrs Flannigan, we mustn't be hard on the lad; he doesn't know any better at present. Don't be afraid, we'll soon teach him to behave himself, and then we'll make quite a useful boy of him.'

'Well, if ye do that ye'll be a wonder, sir, for he's the wildest little devil as ever I clapped eyes on. And that's a big talkin', for I've seen a many.'

'Where is he now?'

'Asleep in the room next to mine at the back, sir. If you want to see him you'd best take the key, for I've locked the little varmint in, not knowin' fwat mischief he wouldn't be up to if I didn't.'

I took the key and went round to the room at the back. Arriving there, I stood before the door and listened, but not a sound came from within. I inserted the key, turned the handle and passed inside. Then I called 'Billy,' but no answer rewarded me. I called again, but still with the same result. Thinking he must either be sleeping very soundly or playing me some trick, I lit a match. The bed stood in a corner, but it was not tenanted, nor could I discover a sign of the urchin. The door, however, had been locked, and there was no window in the room, so how could he have

got out? I searched about, but not being able to discover him, returned at last to the house, resolved to demand an explanation on the morrow.

Next morning, as I was crossing the yard, I saw Billy at his breakfast in the kitchen. On observing me he looked up and grinned in such a mirth-compelling fashion, that I forbore from making any inquiries which might result in trouble. That night and the next I went to his room only to make the same curious discovery as before.

On the third morning I was sitting in the veranda, putting a new cracker on my stock-whip, when the storekeeper, a young Englishman named Bruckett, came up to see me.

'Well, Bruckett,' I said, looking up at him, as he ascended the steps, 'what is it? Anything wrong?'

'I came up to see you about the chestnut night horse, sir,' he answered.

'What about him?' I inquired.

'Only that he's no good for anything at all—he's quite worn out. To look at him you'd imagine he's been ridden all night, over bad country, at racing pace. He's in a regular lather even now, and it's as much as he can do to walk. I thought it was no use leaving him in the paddock in such a state, so I've had him taken up and put in the stable for you to see.'

'I'll come down and look at him directly I've finished this,' I said, and he thereupon left me.

When I had completed my work I picked up my hat, and whistling to my dogs, set off for the stable. On the way I encountered Billy, who turned and trudged silently along by my side, his hands as usual thrust deep down into his trouser pockets, and his hat tilted over his nose.

Once, as we approached the stables, I thought he looked suspiciously at me—but as he volunteered no remark, I asked no questions.

There could be no doubt that the horse, which every night was kept in the fire paddock near the house to be ready in case of emergency, was in a very bad way. As Bruckett had said, he looked as if he had been ridden at a gallop half the night, and was completely worn out. When Billy discovered the object of my visit, he went out into the yard and whistled softly to himself. I gave a few orders and presently joined him.

'It's funny about that horse, isn't it, Billy?' I said, as we went towards the store.

Billy agreed that it was certainly peculiar, and capped his assertion with an oath of considerable power; for which I promptly lectured him.

'By the way,' I continued, 'Murtagh (one of the hands) tells me that when he came to saddle his horse this morning, he found his stirrup leathers put up to the top holes. I wonder whose legs are as short as that. It couldn't be Murtagh, you know, for his are longer than mine.'

'E 'ave got turble (terrible) long legs, ain't 'e?' said Billy, with the scarce concealed intention of diverting the conversation into another channel.

'Billy,' I said sternly, regarding him again with close attention.

He met my eyes without flinching.

'Billy,' I remarked once more, 'you're hiding something from me.'

This time he looked all round the horizon before he brought his eyes up to mine. When they got there, however, they regarded me as before without a flicker of the lids.

'Do you know who has been riding that horse?' I inquired, half expecting a denial.

But if Billy were anything else, he was no liar. So he spat on the ground, hoisted his trousers, pulled forward his cabbage-tree, and then said deliberately, and as I thought with a little touch of defiance, 'Of course I knows; why, bless yer, I have!'

'Indeed, and pray why did you do it?'

'I dunno; I wanted a ride, I serpose. I can't abide that there room at night, it's so stuffy, an' so I climbed up the chimley and got out and went.'

The upshot of it all was that Billy, from that day forward, was allowed an animal for his own special use, and was invested with the definite rank of horse and cowboy at a microscopical salary. The duties suited him admirably, and to see the urchin mount his steed by sticking his toes into the hollows of the brute's near fore-leg, and clutching at the mane, was a sight of which I never grew weary. And there could be no doubt about it, the child could ride. He was as much at home upon a horse's back as a bank clerk is upon his high stool, and what was more singular, even the roughest animals quickly became tractable in his hands. Satisfactory, however, as all this was, there can be no blinking the fact that Billy was continually in hot water. The week was but a round of scrapes and peccadillos on his part. Mrs Flammigan found him cheeky and blasphemous; the wives of the married hands, who were jealous of him without exception, reported that he fought their youngsters on every possible opportunity, when, to their chagrin, he invariably came off conqueror, and what was worse, that he taught them to smoke, and led them into such continual mischief that they could not be permitted to run at large with him at all. I remonstrated with him, and on two occasions felt compelled to castigate him, but though he promised amendment, it made little or no difference.

Then came the arrival of our precious baby, and in the excitement consequent upon that great event, Billy, his sayings, and doings, were relegated to a second place. Never shall I forget the day when he first saw the child. The little fellow was lying in his mother's arms, in the veranda, when Billy made his appearance with a note from the storekeeper. While I was reading it, he was asked if he would care to see the infant. He jerked his chin into the air by way of signifying assent, and accordingly the veil that protected the little face was withdrawn. Billy, with his hands as usual thrust deep into his pockets, looked down upon it, while my wife and I watched him, wondering what he would do or say. He made no remark, however, save to ask if he were to take back an answer to Mr Brukett, and on my replying

in the negative, crammed his hat further on to his head and went down the steps again whistling softly. But he had not gone very far before he turned, and once more stood before us. Divining his wish, my wife again drew back the curtain that he might see the sleeping infant. He looked steadily at it for nearly a minute, then heaved a heavy sigh, wheeled about, and went slowly away. After that, Billy did not attempt to disguise his admiration; month in month out, he was so continually on the lookout for an opportunity of seeing the baby, that I told my wife I should soon feel compelled to deprive him of his other duties and appoint him nurse. What was more extraordinary still, his admiration never seemed to grow weaker. Indeed, ten months later, a threat that any more fights or evil reports, which might reach my ears, would end in his being debarred from the cradle altogether, was sufficient to keep Billy immaculate for something like three weeks. An awful fall from grace, however, was the result.

One morning, three weeks after his first birthday, the babe was placed in his hammock in the shady veranda, while his mother went to the kitchen to interview her cook. I was writing a letter in my office when she burst in upon me declaring that the precious child was lost. 'I left him in the hammock only ten minutes ago while I went to the kitchen,' she gasped, 'and when I came back he was gone. I've been into all the rooms and I can't find him anywhere.'

'Perhaps Mrs Flammigan has taken him up,' I said, not being able to understand what else could have befallen him.

'No, she couldn't; I have been with her all the time,' she answered. 'Oh! what can have become of him?'

An inspiration seized me, and I went to the end of the veranda and called 'Billy.' Receiving no answer, I asked one of the hands, who was passing through the yard at the moment, whether he had seen the urchin.

'No, sir,' the man replied, 'but I heard the overseer telling him a while back to go down to the twelve mile paddock to look for one of the cows that's missing.'

'If that's so, Billy can have had nothing to do with it,' I said, turning to my wife. 'Perhaps the little chap fell out of the hammock and has crawled away into the bushes. He may be asleep somewhere. Let us look!'

Thereupon, assisted by the storekeeper, who had just come up, and two of the men, we began our hunt, searching in the house and peering among the bushes in the garden. Not a sign, however, of the precious infant could we discover. And all this time, her mind filled with thoughts of wells and snakes, my wife was nearly beside herself with terror. Finally I sent for every man then at home, and organised a regular search among the out-buildings—but still without success. The boy seemed to have disappeared off the face of the earth. By mid-day we were at our wits' end to know what could have become of him. Then suddenly I bethought me of the dry creek bed about a hundred and fifty yards from the house. Could he possibly have managed to

crawl so far as that? No sooner did the place, however, occur to my memory than I was off to it.

Short distance though it was from the house, it seemed an eternity before I reached it. Then I looked down from the high bank, and a minute later was running back as hard as I could go to fetch my wife. We approached the spot together and took in the whole scene.

On the white sand, and in the shade of a big ti-tree, sat the baby, beating his little fat hands together, and crowing with all his might and main; while in front of him, decorated with plumes of grass and leaves, solemnly danced and pranced the atrocious Billy. Both were enjoying themselves to the top of their bent, but the merriment of one ceased abruptly as the indignant mother swept down the bank and clutched her offspring in her arms. Then leaving me to deal with the principal offender as I might deem best for the welfare of his soul, she made her way home, the baby screaming *adieu* to his companion over her shoulder. From that day forward Billy was forbidden, on any pretext whatsoever, to venture near the cradle.

And now, after all this introduction, I am brought to the commencement of my narrative proper.

At the time of which I am writing, Queensland was approaching a period of awful trouble. For years past the labour question had been calling for serious consideration. Every shearing-time the scum of the earth (I am not referring to honest men), who patrolled the country, thieving, intimidating, and falsely calling themselves bushmen, had been growing more and more insolent. Almost refusing to do legitimate work, they scamped what they did do in such a fashion, and accompanied it with so much cruel tyranny, that everybody knew a crisis must soon come. Come it did, and in a fashion that no one, who had experience of it, will be likely to forget.

To grasp my meaning properly, you must understand that earlier in the season, thousands of the riff-raff of the colonies, calling themselves unionists, exceptionally well armed and mounted, had banded themselves together to achieve a certain result, which was neither more nor less than the destruction of the squatters. A conference was held and a general strike of station hands ordered. Every man in pastoral employment was commanded to participate in it, and those who refused paid dearly for their contumacy. From that time forward, stations were robbed, innocent men intimidated, bush fires started, woolsheds burned, railway bridges destroyed, cattle maimed, until the stability of one of, if not *the*, most important industries of the colonies trembled in the balance.

For some months after the strike was declared general my men remained true to me. Then outside influences began to creep in among them in the shape of threatening letters; delegates from the unions arrived and harangued them, until, finally, all those who were sufficiently weak-minded to fear the ridicule or threats of their mates gave in and decided to cease work. In vain I remonstrated. They

informed me they had no option, and that it would be only courting certain death for them to remain. On hearing this I called all my employees together and addressed them, promising that I would protect to the very best of my ability any man who should stand by me in my trouble. At the same time I took care to make it clear to them that the law would be sure to back me up. When my harangue was finished, I requested those who had any desire to remain to step into the veranda, while those who wished to go, might continue where they were. Out of the sixteen present (the two overseers not included), two immediately sprang into the veranda—while the balance stood sheepishly watching us from the sunlit garden, afraid to take my part. Feeling certain no threat or entreaty would move the latter, I bade them come into the office for their wages, and after that make themselves scarce as soon as they could conveniently manage it. They took me at my word, and in less than an hour not a single unionist remained upon the place.

To understand something of the difficult position their defection would place me in, you must try to imagine yourself left in charge of a station about the size of Yorkshire, carrying something like three hundred thousand sheep, with only five men and a boy to do the necessary work upon it. The very idea was preposterous. But I was comforted by the assurance that Billy had promised to stand by me.

A week later I received a peremptory and insulting letter from the union demanding that my remaining men should either join their society or leave my employment, and holding out dire threats of vengeance if I should induce them to remain contumacious. This letter I read to the men, who with one accord authorised me to take no notice of it. In consequence, my back country was set on fire that week by some miscreant, and fifty thousand innocent sheep perished in the flames. Then one morning a band of armed unionists swept down upon us and surrounded the station, and that visit was the forerunner of the worst part of our trouble.

Their leader, a big Irishman, with red hair and a voice like a bull, rode up to the office door and demanded an audience with me.

Slipping a revolver into my belt, I went out to him.

'Ye've got three dirty blacklegs wid ye now,' he began, without preamble. 'Fetch 'em out to me.'

'You must tell me first what you want with them,' I answered as quietly as possible.

'Never you mind f'what I want wid 'em,' he replied. 'Fetch 'em out to me or 'twill be the worse for ye.'

Seeing that it would be foolish to refuse to comply with his request, I called to the men to come into the veranda. Fortunately they had the wit to bring their weapons with them, and thus, with the two overseers and Billy, who wore a large Colt revolver stuck conspicuously in his belt, we presented a sufficiently determined appearance to overawe the hectoring ruffians before us.

The next ten minutes were occupied with

threats and cajoleries, but to both my men proved adamant.

'Well, since you won't listen to fair talk, we'll be off,' said the leader of the party, when he had come to the end of his arguments, 'but I warn ye we'll be back again in a pig's whisper, and then Hiven help the lot o' ye if ye don't pay attention to fwhat we say.'

So saying, he wheeled his horse round, and with one last gesture of defiance, rode off, his followers at his heels.

As you will see, apart from the evil resulting to the station from the insufficient attention we were able to bestow upon it, the position was one of absolute danger for ourselves. Many were the times I wished I had been able to foresee what was coming, and have sent my wife and child away to safety in the south. But now with the country-side patrolled by armed ruffians, and with the knowledge before me that ten thousand more were under canvas, drilling like soldiers, less than three hundred miles distant, I knew it was worse than useless to think of such a thing.

One precaution, however, I took, and as you will see, I very soon had reason to be thankful I had done so. That was to arrange that every man upon the place should sleep in my own house at nights, and also that a regular watch should be kept, hour by hour. To Billy Binks this change of quarters meant supreme happiness, and a curious sight it was to see the little fellow, with the big revolver in his belt, solemnly mounting guard over the baby as he slept in the veranda. Surely such an old-fashioned head on such young shoulders was never seen before.

PETS AND PESTS IN BARBADOES.

By MAJOR BATTERSBY, F.R.A.S.

IF there be anywhere upon earth a paradise for the animal kingdom—carefully excluding the human race and the whole family of the beasts of burden—it should be found in Barbadoes. In our northern winter the struggle for existence amongst birds and beasts is always painful, and sometimes hopeless, when the ground is iron-bound with frost and white with snow. In latitude thirteen degrees north the Barbadoes blackbird, a cousin of our English starling, which rejoices in the tremendous name of 'Quiscalus Crassirostris,' has no care for food or warmth to trouble him, but may live his life like the human blackbirds around him, with a minimum of toil and a maximum of placid enjoyment of existence. There are no enemies to annoy him, no birds of prey to alarm him. He can build his nest in a sand-box tree ('Hura crepitans'), up the trunk of which, studded as it is with thorns set as closely together as the spots in a calico print, not even a monkey could climb, much less a negro. What a paradise such a tree would be for our English magpie, sorely vexed by schoolboys, and how he would chuckle when he found it!

There are only five or six species of birds indigenous to Barbadoes, and they do not increase

in numbers. Possibly the lazy and luxurious life which they lead is not conducive to longevity; but, on the other hand, it appears to suit the negro, who thrives and multiplies exceedingly, and covers the island with long wooden huts like dolls' houses, in each of which lives at least one family, and which will all blow away into the sea like a pack of cards when the next hurricane comes.

Into this terrestrial paradise man has introduced one devil very worthy of the name—the mongoose. In Jamaica and Martinique he was of some use in killing venomous snakes; but in Barbadoes there never were any venomous snakes to kill, and only one very rare variety of the harmless kind. So, as the negro is fond of keeping fowls, and the mongoose of eating their eggs and chickens, it would seem a pity to have allowed him to land. One would have thought that, with every man's hand against him in an island with a population of about eleven hundred to the square mile, he would have been exterminated long ago; but he has certainly not been. A pair of very fine ones prowled about in our back garden for a while, till we set a trap with an egg for bait, and in an hour had the female secured. She was very angry—not in the least terrified, but simply furious. She ate the egg in the trap whilst we looked on, and spat and snarled like an angry cat, every hair on her back bristling with rage. We admired her pluck, and released her. She and her mate took the hint, and were seen no more.

Probably the mongoose lives chiefly on the green lizards which swarm on every tree, and which certainly have the hardest life of any creatures in Barbadoes, since their flesh is so delicate that everything eats them which can catch them. Cats, fowls, birds, monkeys, and snakes, all devour the poor lizards, which have only two methods of defending themselves, both very inadequate for the purpose. One is their power of changing their colour, whereby they can appear bright green at one moment on the leaf of an aloe, and then dark chocolate brown on a piece of damp earth. If this does not conceal them from their enemy, they drop their tails. The caudal appendage jumps from the ground, and makes a frantic dance all by itself, and if the pursuer is deluded into seizing it, the lizard avails itself of the chance to escape and grow another tail. But we are bound to confess that we have never yet seen a quadruped taken in by the artifice, though it may deceive a bird now and then.

For the rest, the poor lizards are harmless things, with pathetic eyes, in which lurks an expression of weariness and disillusion, as though they were as old as the world itself, and had found it all vanity and vexation of spirit. They are fond of plaintive music, and will enter at the open windows when a piano is playing, and sit listening, and nodding their queer flat heads, and looking out of those wistful eyes at the player, till he, or she, if of an imaginative temperament, might fancy he was playing to an audience of transmigrated souls.

The mongoose loves the rat—that is to say, he generally eats him; though hybrids between the

two animals are not unknown. Into whatever hole the rat can go, the mongoose can follow, so that the poor rats are driven to take refuge in the trees and become arborescent animals. They eke out a precarious existence on the eggs and young of birds which are foolish enough to build their nests in trees whose trunks are undefended by thorns. Whilst the pair of mongooses lived in our back garden, we found there one day an unfortunate rat, which had taken refuge in the hollow stem of an old Spanish Bayonet ('*Yucca draconis*'). He was very gaunt and starved, so had probably been hiding there for some days. It would be as much as any mongoose's or rat's life was worth to enter one of the great holes which, like a rabbit warren, honeycomb the sand under the tamarind trees by the sea. For there live the great land-crabs in endless variety, from the old brown warrior ('*Gelasimus bellator*') with a claw six inches long and as large as his whole body, which claw he uses as a defence for his home, by placing his wife in safety at the bottom of his burrow, and then sitting just inside the mouth of the hole, with this powerful pair of pincers filling the opening; down to the little scarlet foragers which scamper about amongst the dead leaves, like living pieces of cloth from a soldier's tunic; or the hermit-crabs, which appear to spend their lives in looking for better shells than those they occupy, and never refuse an offer of a larger and more roomy habitation, wherein they show themselves singularly undeserving their name of '*Cenobita Diogenes*.'

Your land-crab is a carnivorous animal, and a cannibal in all senses of the word. If you shoot him from a window with an air-gun, you may see his comrades eat him there and then. The road to Charles' Fort, in the garrison, runs for some distance along the hedge bounding the military cemetery. On a dark and rainy night the field-officer on duty on his way to turn out the fort guard hears on all sides of him uncanny noises of rattling claws and scurrying feet, and knows the crabs are at work! It really requires nerve, or rather the absence of nerves, and the sense of security imparted by the wearing of jackboots, to face the perilous passage in the wet season.

If the crab eats man, the negro eats him. The approved method for his capture is to sally forth on a dark night after heavy rain with a sack and a lantern. To this equipment the negro adds a stick, but we prefer a landing-net. Walking slowly through the wet grass, one observes a great claw, and a pair of goggle eyes staring in a bewildered manner at the light. While he is dazzled is the time to secure him. If you give him time to recover his wits, he will be into a hole or up a tree. A grim and awesome sight is one of these uncanny monsters climbing a tree by the fitful light of a lantern! When the sack is heavy with a crawling, fighting mass, it is emptied into a cask, with the top removed, as the bulging sides are beyond the scaling powers of even a crab. The negro cooks and eats him forthwith, not being squeamish. The white man prefers to feed his captives for a fortnight or so on corn-meal, after which he makes soup of them. The flavour is said to be excellent, but of this we cannot speak from personal experience. Many strange things have we eaten in the West

Indies, but we draw the line at carnivorous land-crabs!

'Bhunder,' the Capuchin monkey which we keep chained to a running ring under the ever-green tree ('*Ficus nitida*') which shades our front door, is fond of a small crab now and then. He has a salutary respect for the claws of the smallest; and a large one he will not face at all. His method with one of suitable size is to knock it about with his paw by quick pats until it is sufficiently dazed to give him a chance of smashing its claw with a large stone. Once he has succeeded in that, he knows his victim is defenceless, and tears it to pieces and devours it at his leisure. He is a cruel little beast, just like a boy of limited intelligence and bad heredity. Once a poor little green paroquet, which lived in the veranda and was perfectly tame, was foolish enough to pay him a visit. He carefully plucked her, and then drowned the unfortunate bird in his water-pot, after which his mistress declined to speak to him for several days. His great friend is 'Cox' the kitten—indeed, the affection of Capuchin monkeys for cats is well known and remarkable. It must be allowed that Bhunder's affection for Cox is of a very selfish character. He will not give her a morsel of his food, even when he can eat no more himself, but confines himself to seizing her whenever she comes near him, taking a turn of her tail round his neck, and upsetting her by catching her fore-leg on the far side and drawing it under her body. Then he rolls her about on the ground and teases her, till she tries to retaliate by scratching him, when he gets hold of all her four paws and holds her down firmly.

Bhunder's good time comes when the rain has turned the soil round his tree to mud, and the latter has caked in the swivel of his chain, and clogged it so that it will not turn. He knows by experience that he has now only to catch the chain over a branch and twist till it breaks. Meanwhile, he has been studying a scheme of mischief. He generally begins by entering the dining-room through the open windows and mixing oil, vinegar, salt, mustard, hot sauces, and pepper, in an awful mess upon the tablecloth. He can open any box so long as the fastening is not beyond his strength. It is never beyond his intellect. Driven from the dining-room by the angry butler, he proceeds to tease the other pets, pull out the macaws' tail feathers, upset their drinking-water, tear off the hibiscus flowers, and eat the gardenia blossoms, and generally enjoy himself. When tired of mischief, he commonly walks in and surrenders himself with a grin, knowing that voluntary submission is the best way to avoid punishment. He never wishes to escape, knowing how well off he is. Indeed, when the butler brings in afternoon tea, he has a standing order to release Bhunder, who rushes into the house and upstairs to get his share. He does not try to run wild on these occasions, well knowing that, with two or three yards of chain attached to him, he would be an easy prey. When we wish to tease him, we give him a tin money-box with a few pence in it. He can see the money through the slit, but neither shaking nor banging on the floor will extract it. He can never resist trying the experiment, and gets angry when laughed

at. He has a great range of language, and Professor Garner was probably wise in selecting the Capuchin monkey for his experiments.

Another specimen of the Simian race known to us as 'the wee Bhunder' we keep loose amongst the trees, as he is not of the mischievous nature of his brother. This is a charming little animal, only the size of a squirrel, and quite as agile as one. He has a golden brown back, gray breast, and a long tail. His face is black, with a haughty expression, recalling to mind the pictures of the hapless Marie-Antoinette. Over the forehead is a bush of white hair, standing straight up, and about an inch long, which gives the little beast a really handsome expression. What his particular genus is we have been unable to determine. He is certainly an uncommon species and a charming pet. He comes down regularly for food, and eats bananas out of our hands. When hungry, he has a shrill pipe like a boatswain's whistle.

One of his great sources of food he finds in the two blue and yellow macaws ('*Macrocerus Hyacinthus*'). These birds we obtained young from Demerara. They live, quite at liberty, in a frangipani tree, whence they descend when hungry, and come waddling to the windows to be fed. We named them 'Ferdinand and Isabella,' after the Columbus celebration. They do little credit to their royal names. Their plumage is magnificent, and their size not far off three feet from tip of beak to end of tail. But they have none of the intelligence of the parrot tribe, and are much more on a level with the domestic hen in this respect. Their great beaks could almost sever the wee Bhunder in two, and yet, when he sees them eating bananas, he can almost always force them to let the fruit drop by jumping over them once or twice, and getting them into a flurry. It is like a practical exposition of Jack the Giant-killer to watch the performance. Up in their tree, the great birds are always squabbling, and pushing one another off the boughs. When it rains, they perch on the highest branches and scream like a whole colony of rooks. We have heard them a mile away. The scream is evidently the origin of their name, the latter being as nearly as possible the phonetic spelling of the former. We live in hopes that the royal pair may take it into their stupid heads to nest some day. A young macaw with its enormous beak must be a remarkable object.

There are a few snakes in the under-wood between our quarters and the sea. In April, on a wet day, we caught a large one asleep outside the stable. Having induced him to crawl into a large jar, we constructed a good-sized box for him with a glass front, and a hole in the side, closed by a glass stopper, whereby to introduce food. Through this hole we made our captive crawl, and named him 'Obadiah.' A diet of lizards agreed well with Obadiah, whose mouth was of so expansible a nature that he cared nothing as to whether he swallowed the poor victim tail first or doubled up from the middle. He proved a greedy snake, and could devour three seven-inch lizards a day with ease. On the 24th of May he cast his skin, which had clearly got too tight for him. On the 9th of June he astonished us by laying seven eggs, thus proving that we had mistaken

his sex! The eggs came to nothing. On the 16th of July he cast his skin again, all in one continuous piece even to the discs, like tale, which had covered the eyes. At the time of writing *she* is more than double the thickness she was at the time of capture, and as hungry as ever. We feel a compunction about the lizards; but it is better to sacrifice them than warm-blooded animals. We once put in a mouse; but the poor little creature trembled so with fear when it saw the snake, that we had to release it.

One other pet deserves mention—namely, 'Ahasuerus' the tortoise. He is a tabular tortoise ('*Testudo tabulata*'), so called from the regular hexagonal plates on his back. He was sold by a negro, who complained that his children were so fond of playing with it that they absented themselves from school! One would like to know how to set about playing with a tortoise! Ahasuerus is about a foot long. When he is awake, he is pretty active, and can travel at quite a mile an hour. He is fond of hiding himself in the long Guinea grass and going to sleep. When he awakes, he displays a great appetite for bread and milk. We put it before him in a tin, and he makes several aimless dabs with his great head before he can get his nose into it. His shell is battered and dented, and he looks at least a hundred years old, which he may well be. He can scarcely be called interesting as a pet, though he certainly causes one to wonder why he was created so ugly and helpless.

However, if one begins to discuss such questions in the tropics, one is soon puzzled. Why were mosquitoes given a taste for blood, and provided with 'two lancets, a double barbed spear, a needle, a saw, a pump, and a bag of poison,' for the purpose of torturing such warm-blooded animals as they may encounter?

Then there are the ants. How many varieties reside in our house we should be sorry to say. Some of them have wings, and are half an inch long, or more, and love to fly over a dining-table lamp and light on the dishes. Some have a mission to remove carrion of all kinds, and may be seen scientifically carrying out operations in the moving of dead cockroaches, which throw the builders of the Pyramids into the shade. The sugar ants are the most annoying. They are so small that they could penetrate a hole made by a small pin in a piece of paper, so that there is no keeping them out of cupboards and boxes.

The ant in the West Indies is capable of great deeds. In 1518 to 1520 he overran the island of Hispaniola to such an extent that it was on the point of being abandoned by the Spaniards—in which case some events of history might have turned out very differently. In 1760 the same kind of ant ('*Formica omnivora*') was imported to Barbadoes in some mould brought from the island of Tobago. They multiplied in their new home till the island was almost rendered uninhabitable.

In 1780 the great hurricane came up from the waste of waters to the eastward, and burst upon the Antilles and the Caribbean Sea. When it passed away, up the Gulf Stream, it left behind it shattered fleets and ruined forts, and dead men by thousands. But it saved the islands, just as Egypt was saved from the plague

called up by Moses. The ants were gone. Drowned by the rain-torrents, or swept out into the open sea by the resistless gale, their numbers never rose again to a dangerous point, and at the present day there are few of the species to be found.

What shall we say of the West Indian cockroach ('*Blatta Americana*')? Those who have lived in houses infested by the common black beetle may form some idea of them if they magnify the said 'beetle' enormously, give him a most malodorous smell, and then introduce him to drawing-room and bedroom, kitchen and pantry, stable and cellar. When he is young he is not much larger than an ant, and finds his way into boxes and cupboards with ease. He grows rapidly, and he has a healthy appetite! Above all things, he loves the colour red.

No! As we remarked at the beginning of this paper, Barbadoes is a paradise for the animal kingdom, and it is not a bad place for the black man; but the white one who wishes to keep his goods and his temper, not to mention his digestion, had better not settle anywhere within thirteen degrees of the equator! 'Experto crede!'

'AN UNFORTUNATE EXPEDITION.'

A STORY OF THE WESTERN SAHARA.

Author of *Rising of the Brass Men*; *A West African Story*, &c.

BETWEEN the south of Morocco and the river Senegal stretches for some hundreds of miles a sandy coast which forms the western border of the Sahara desert. Inland lies a wild and desolate land of low rocky hills and wastes of hot sand, although here and there in isolated spots, where a little rain falls at long intervals, may be found clusters of date palms, a little rough barley, and enough small bushes and harsh wiry grass to support a few sheep.

This sun-scorched, dried-up country is inhabited by wandering tribes, half Moor and half Arab, who travel about from oasis to oasis in search of food for their horses and sheep. These are wild men, true children of the desert, and although both Sultan of Morocco and Spanish Government claim a kind of suzerainty over them, they acknowledge no man's authority, and are as ready to shed the blood of Moorish shereef as they are that of Spanish officer or English adventurer.

It is believed that there are valuable minerals in this country—that there is gold I know—but for the reasons given, prospecting is not successful, neither have explorers always returned. Now some little time ago a company was organised in England 'to explore and develop the great mineral riches' of the country in question, and Spanish schooners from the Canary Islands were sent with presents in hopes of inducing the Moors to allow miners to prospect. One or two of the officials of the company also spent a pleasant time, lounging about on shady hotel verandas, or making delightful excursions among the vine-clad hills and wild volcanic mountains of Grand Canary and Tenerife, or from time to time chartered

a steamer and spent a day or two on the coast. After this they sent home encouraging reports, and small specimens of gold and other matters, so that the hearts of the shareholders were lifted up in the expectation of twenty-five per cent. dividends, and they did not hesitate to increase the salaries of the officials in question.

Meantime, the wandering tribes held many consultations among the defiles of the hills as to what should be done to the infidel, for the sons of the desert are true Mussulmans. The younger ones suggested that the whole party should be killed off-hand, but the gray-bearded sheikhs shook their heads and said: 'That is foolishness, for if you slay them, who will give you presents, even many rolls of cloth, and guns, and knives? Besides, they are not of the race of Spain, and though you would without doubt destroy them, yet would many of the faithful die in the attempt. It were better, therefore, to respect the firman of the Sultan which the Christian dogs hold, and allow them to come freely while they enrich us with their cloth and picnic about the land, and we will even extend our good-will and send them guides to lead them—where there is no gold. Thus will Allah blind their eyes that they may find nothing, and when they be tired and the presents cease, then shall ye slay them.' And all the tribesmen agreed that there was wisdom in the words.

Some of my readers may know the harbour of Las Palmas, in the Island of Grand Canary, which is perhaps the dirtiest and at the same time one of the most beautiful on earth, for while below are coaling stations, lime-kilns, and wooden hovels; above, the great volcanic mountains rear their jagged crests against the sapphire sky, with soft clouds of silvery mist shrouding their vine-clad slopes.

One night in August there was a sound of revelry by night in the little tavern of Juan Garcias at the head of the mole, which showed that the exploring expedition was enjoying itself preparatory to embarking. It was what the Americans would call a 'mixed crowd.' In a corner sat the two Westons, Tom and Jim, who were nominally in charge, handsome bright-eyed young fellows, both shouting with delight at the antics of big Peter, engineer of a Spanish steamer, who was dancing a sword dance to the music of two guitars and a mandoline, played by the Spanish captain, Manuel, and two of his swarthy crew. Around the wall lounged six men, known as 'the army,' who, on the strength of having at one time served her majesty, had been engaged as a guard of honour. There were also two Syrians to act as interpreters with the Moors, while sitting on the middle of the table discoursing upon things in general was Captain Thomas, who had been everything from captain of an Australian clipper to successful prospector in Alaska, and who was practically in charge of the party. When he was sober, which was, however, rarely the case, it could not have been in better hands.

At length, when the expedition had drunk all the manzanilla and sweet moscatel in the place, and shouted themselves hoarse singing

'The road to Mandalay,' it took itself off and staggered along the mole in the direction of its launch. The 'army' lingered behind to settle a dispute about payment by throwing the unfortunate 'mozo' over the mole into the sea, informing him as they did so, that this was how they were prepared to treat 'the 'ole bloomin' Arabs.' As, however, the islanders can swim like fishes, the episode only meant a further bill for the company, while two armed *guardias civiles*, looking on unmoved, with Spanish gravity remarked that 'truly all the English are mad.'

A little later the rattling of blocks and slatting of canvas announced that the fast schooner *Hermosa Beatriz* was getting underway, and by-and-by a dim outline of white canvas that gleamed in the moonlight, as the graceful vessel threshed her way along over the glittering sea, close hauled to the fresh trade breeze, was all that the watchers on the mole could see of the expedition.

Two days after, Jim Weston, turning out on deck at five o'clock, found the schooner heading for a line of sandy coast, over which the sun was just rising, lighting up the heavy surf that broke on the beach. Lowering down the peak of the mainsail she crossed the tail of a bank on which the long Atlantic swell was breaking in sheets of snowy foam, and with bos'n Carlos swinging the lead in the fore-rigging, the captain carefully felt his way up a channel leading between the bank and the shore, and a few minutes later the little vessel rode securely to two anchors, rolling from rail to rail and throwing sheets of glittering spray over her bows as she dipped into the creamy broken seas that swept over the bank.

After breakfast the big launch was put over the side, and although there was some trouble in getting through the surf, the whole party, with their goods and chattels, landed wet but safe on the beach. Each man at once strapped on his load of provisions, blanket, and felt-lined tins of water. The two Westons, the two Syrians, and Captain Thomas carried revolvers as well as rifles, while the 'army' was armed with the Martini alone.

When all was ready, Jim Weston gave the word to march, and the party tramped along under their heavy loads, ankle-deep in hot sand, until towards noon they emerged from the sandhills into a flat treeless plain. Under foot lay loose red earth mixed with sand and white pebbles, and the only sign of vegetation was a few thorny bushes; while ahead, the plain stretched without a leaf or blade of grass to break the monotony, until blue and distant on the eastern horizon lay a low line of hills which was their destination. Overhead the sun shone down with pitiless fierceness, and the ground lay shimmering in the glare with that peculiar dancing of the air which may sometimes be seen in England on a hot July day.

'We can't stand still without sunstroke, lads,' said old Captain Thomas, 'so come along; while the perspiration's running off you it's all right;' and worn out and half-blinded with the brightness they stumbled along until sunset, when they camped at the foot of a few rocks.

In this land there is little twilight, and scarcely had the sun dipped behind the sandhills than the darkness came down, blotting out the glowing crimson and green of the western sky, and with it came a cool breeze which occasionally blows at night in the desert, though where it springs from amid the waste of hot sand it is hard to say. When we had cut a few of the brown thorny bushes which grew every here and there, a fire was made and a kettleful of tea and a few drops of vermouth washed down the frugal meal. The two Moorish hostages who always accompanied the party, assured them that none of their people were near, so arranging for the 'army' to relieve one another as sentries, Jim Weston rolled himself in his blanket and lay down, looking up towards the stars which in that clear air flashed with a brilliancy unknown to the north, and drinking in the cool night breeze that swept in grateful freshness across his sun-scorched face until he fell asleep.

Next morning the whole party, including the sentry who was slumbering as peacefully as any, were awakened by the hot sun on their faces, and after a scanty breakfast were soon on the march. 'Worse nor a bloomin' treadmill, Tom,' said one of the army to his comrade; 'no ale, no time to sit down, no gold, an' no nothink.'

'Well, if you ain't got no gold, be thankful you've got no lead neither,' was the reply, and the party went on in silence. Towards noon they reached the first of the low rocky hills, and for some hours threaded their way through a stony defile, in the bottom of which it appeared as if a little water had run at some remote period. That is what the Arabs call a 'wady' or river, and as the Moors had indicated this as a spot in which gold was to be found, all hands were on the alert. Captain Thomas, however, could find no trace of any metal, and shortly before dark he came running back calling out that he had seen three or four mounted men disappear round the shoulder of a hill. The guides either had not seen them or would not admit that they had, so when night fell the party climbed the side of the valley and camped in a hollow on one of the bordering hills. 'You can arrange it any way you like, men,' said Weston, 'but there must be two of you on watch together all through the night, and no noise; if you see any Moors, let me know at once.'

None of the expedition will ever forget that night; the surrounding hills shut off the breeze, and the hot rocks radiated the warmth they had stored by day, so that the heat was, as the army said, 'somethink awful.' Soaked in perspiration they smoked and chatted in low tones until Captain Thomas, who had been in the country years before, took up the tale and told how such and such an unfortunate Spaniard had perished by knife or bullet, or had been carried away into the far Sahara, while the hostages, who understood a little English, licked their lips and nodded their heads approvingly. At length Jim Weston nudged him and whispered sharply, 'Stop it, you fool, or you'll have the whole lot bolting—come out with me.'

Side by side they climbed the slope and

crossed a strip of tableland, and Weston stamped his foot as the words, 'There's a Burma girl a waitin' an' she sings ka lo la lai,' rang out through the still night from the camp they had left behind, followed by the swinging chorus, 'On the road to Mandalay.'

'What's that fool Tom doing to let them make that row,' he said. 'If the Moors are on the maraud, there'll be half a pound of slugs in camp before they know— Thank goodness they've stopped now.'

By this time the two stood looking down into a narrow rocky gorge which lay at their feet, one side clear and distinct in the moonlight, while the other lay in deep shadow. Weston raised his head and slowly swept his gaze around, but he could see nothing but a wild stretch of stony desolate hills, gleaming white and ghostly in the moonlight, and seamed with dark patches of shadow where the valleys intersected them.

As he stood and watched, the captain grasped his companion's arm. 'Drop down flat on your face and keep the rifle barrel in the shadow,' he said; and they both flattened themselves against the hot stones, while from up the valley came the faint sound of hoofs.

'I hope to the Lord those fools won't sing again,' said the captain, and they both waited breathlessly while the soft sound of hoofs came nearer and nearer—for the Arab horses are rarely shod.

At length from out of the shadow emerged three camels swinging along at their awkward gait, both left feet together, and both right feet together, a way in which, as far as I am aware, no other animal travels. On the back of each sat two Moors clad in a long blue garment, half tunic and half shawl, which hung from the shoulders, loose blue trousers and white burnouse; following one by one came a score of horsemen, the barrels of their long guns gleaming in the moonlight. Beautiful weapons these are, the fine Damascus steel barrels often inlaid with gold and silver, and the stocks curiously dovetailed ivory and hardwood. Riding silently one by one into the moonlight, they passed away again into the shadow like a procession of ghosts.

When the last had gone the captain said: 'I know them. They are some of the tribe the Spaniards at Rio de Oro had the trouble with, and if they are looking for us our lives are not worth much.' Rising to their feet the two companions climbed a small elevation, from the summit of which they watched the horsemen emerge from the hills and strike across the desert in the direction of the coast, then they turned towards the camp. As they neared it several rifle-shots rang out and the two Moorish hostages went flying past them. In an instant Weston threw up his rifle, but just as he lined the foresight on one of the men's shoulders the captain seized his arm.

'Let them go,' he said. 'If you shoot one of these fellows we'll have the whole country down on us to-morrow;' and so the two Moors disappeared in a ravine among the hills. On our reaching camp it was decided that as the hostages had bolted, treachery was intended, and they had better make for the coast at once.

Space will not permit us to tell of the return journey. Suffice it to say, that the army declared the march to Cabul to be 'nothing to it,' and that with all their water used up, utterly worn out, scorched with the sun and half blind from the glare, on the morning of the second day the expedition dragged its weary limbs around the point and staggered into the little bay of Santiago.

'Boys,' said Captain Thomas, 'the schooner's gone; there's too much wind and sea here, and she must have run down the coast for shelter.'

This was the end, and the whole party sat down on the sand in despair.

'It's all up,' said one of the soldiers. 'I can't go a foot farther, so we must just sit down and wait for the Moors—here they come too,' and he pointed inland where they saw some twenty mounted Moors and a number on foot making for the sandhills.

'We may just as well stay where we are and make the best stand we can; they won't take me prisoner,' said Jim Weston as he tapped his rifle.

'Don't be fools,' was the captain's reply. 'We can hold the top of that sandhill against them even if they mean business,' and as fast as their tired limbs would let them, the men struggled through the sand to the summit of the dune which rose above any of the surrounding ones, where a hollow was scraped out in the sand; and laying their baggage around the outside, the little party lay down to wait events.

By-and-by the Moors rode into the sandhills, tall handsome men mounted on diminutive horses, and waiting until the men on foot came up, spread themselves round the Englishmen's position, a number lying down amid the sand on neighbouring heights so as to shoot to advantage.

'Ask them what they want, Girardi,' said Tom Weston to the elder Syrian, and the latter standing up spoke in Arabic to a tall sheikh who seemed to be the leader, and after the latter's reply turned to his comrades and said:

'They are come to take us away to the interior where we will be held for a ransom, but not ill-used if we make no resistance.'

'Tell them to come and take us if they can,' said Jim Weston.

'Ear, 'ear! there'll be a gorgeous fight,' replied the army.

Wheeling his horse the sheikh rode back to his followers, and the next minute at full gallop they dashed past the foot of the sandhill, turning in the saddle and firing their guns as they passed, and with a vicious 'phit, phit,' slugs and small stones threw up little puffs of dust and perforated the water tins. Not a man of the expedition fired, but when ten minutes afterwards the cavalcade again approached, the old captain shouted, 'Now lads, give it them this time,' and the army ground their teeth and jammed their left elbows in the sand as they followed the horsemen with the tiny foresight, 'crack, crack,' went the rifles, and a cloud of blue smoke drifted across Weston's face. Next moment his hat was lifted

off his head and something threw a handful of dust in his eyes, while a volley of small stones and slugs whistled over the heads of the defenders.

When he could look out again, two of the horses lay rolling in agony amidst the sand at their feet, while a wounded Moor crawled away on hands and knees. Then he sat up and looked at his perforated hat and felt a little sick, while from overhead the sun's rays poured down with a pitiless heat, the sandhills threw up the glare, and rifle-barrel and sand burned the fingers.

'This ain't no bloomin' fitin', nothin' but a picnic,' said one of the ex-troopers, 'but you may as well be shot as die of sunstroke.'—He stopped suddenly, for three little puffs of smoke blew out from the surrounding sand, and a shower of slugs whistled into the camp.

'I can't see no head, Tom, but that's like the sun on a gun-barrel sticking out behind them stones—let's try.' Both the rifles flashed, and presently a Moor crawled out on his hands and knees, then rolled down the slope, and lay at the bottom a patch of raw blue and brown against the white sand. After this the firing ceased, and Captain Thomas rising to his feet looked round. 'I can't see any sign of them; they must be crawling in the sand somewhere, waiting to rush us,' he said. 'Hurrah! here's the *Beatrice* coming. She has been standing off and on waiting, for there's too much sea to anchor here.'

All jumped to their feet, and as they did so, 'crack, crack, crack,' went three guns, and the smoke floated down the face of the opposite slope. Tom Weston felt a smart blow on his arm, and found he had a slug through it, while one of the troopers got a stone in the leg. There was no help for it, and all hands at once flattened themselves down into the sand, which felt like red cinders, and lay panting in the heat with mouths and throats dry and parched, while they watched with anxious eyes the white canvas of the schooner coming nearer and nearer, until at length she rounded to, and they saw the big launch with ten seamen in it coming ashore.

The chances were, however, that the launch would be swamped in the surf or smashed on the beach, and then their friends would be as badly off as themselves. As they anxiously watched her they saw the tall figure of Carlos, who was standing at the tiller, shove his helm down, and next moment as the launch came flying shoreward on the crest of a big green roller, ten swarthy bare-legged seamen sprang into the water and struggled up the beach against the backwash of the sea. Four men, meantime, remained in the launch and pulled her out clear of the surf. The seamen were only armed with their inseparable long knives, and Carlos carried a sixteen foot oar; but whatever the Spaniard may be he is no coward, and between the 'Canarios' and the Moors, in spite of a certain similarity, there has been for ages a deadly feud, and many a wrecked schooner's crew or 'bacalao' fisherman has disappeared into the wilds of the Sahara.

Dashing the water out of their eyes and

drawing their knives they advanced up the beach, while the expedition marched out in a solid body from the top of the sandhill, and without firing a shot charged straight for the launch right through the Moors who dashed out horse and foot to intercept them. The next minute there was, as the army said, a gorgeous fight. England and Spain side by side, rifle-butto flying among horses' heads, the long knives of the Spanish seamen flashing, and the Westons and the younger Girardi firing their revolvers right and left into the mass.

In the midst of it stood Carlos swinging his long oar at arm's length and knocking his swarthy foes out of their saddles right and left. The fray was so quick and mixed that shooting, except with the revolver, was out of the question, and while the Spaniards used their long knives with effect, the English struck right and left with clubbed rifles. In a few seconds it was over. They broke through the Moors, and rushing waist-deep into the water, tumbled head first over the stern of the plunging launch, and the seamen grasping the oars made for deep water. The younger Girardi, the greater portion of his jaw shot away, lay down in the stern-sheets, and with his repeating-rifle shot several of the Moors; and a few minutes later the expedition stood on the deck of the *Beatrice*, which vessel, under all the sail she could carry, stood away to sea.

There were at least two of their foes hit in the sandhills, besides horses, and several more lay on the beach; while of the adventurers, Girardi lost half of his lower jaw, two Spanish seamen were badly wounded, and a third was taken prisoner and carried away into the desert.

Shortly afterwards the shareholders, seeing no prospect of the twenty-five per cent. dividends, wound up the company; but all those concerned in it will long remember the 'unfortunate expedition.'

TO LOUIE.

THEY say, if I'd a poet be,
'Twere better I should sing
Less oft, Sweetheart, of love and thee,
And change my fretted string,
Then in some newer, less-sung strain
The poet's garland strive to gain.

But sweeter 'tis for me, to sound
Thy beauty and thy name,
Than live a poet laurel-crowned,
And win a world-wide fame;
For dearer far art thou to me
Than fame, or song, or minstrelsy.

Grim Age doth hobble on apace,
Nor slumber by the way,
Too soon he'll win Life's little race,
End Love and lover's lay:
Then while the fleeting hour allows,
To songs of love the lyre I'll rouse.

WILL HILL.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 638.—VOL. XIII.

SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

THE PERSECUTED HERRING.

A GREGARIOUS fish such as the herring is commonly looked upon as one of the least intelligent denizens of the deep. It holds a place in the world of waters amongst marine vertebrates similar to that held by the sheep among terrestrial mammals. While in other respects they may justly be termed the 'rabbit of the sea,' this does not hold good as regards intelligence. Extremely prolific as they apparently are, and forming the food of the greater number of predaceous fish, as well as marine birds and mammals, they are yet not particularly productive as compared with many of their most virulent and formidable enemies. Still we are unable to assert positively the reason for their prevalence, and do not really know how often they may throw ova. There is a tendency to believe that, on account of their multitudes, notwithstanding continued persecution, they must, like the rabbit, reproduce more than once a year. Yet this simple problem has never been solved, although herring in milt and roe may be found in our seas throughout the year. We have no certainty that the same fish, or even the same shoal, throws ova more than once in the twelve months. One would have anticipated that, with all our expenditure on marine investigation, this primary and simple question to the fishing industry of Scotland, so greatly dependent on the herring fishing, should have been settled long ago. But preconceived ideas on this common and little understood fish had apparently diverted inquiry into wrong channels. Only comparatively recently, the view that the herring came from the Arctic regions, and crept gradually down our coasts, has given way before facts that were too stubborn to question. We now know pretty fairly that the Scottish herring is largely a local fish; that every Scottish loch has its own well-defined variety, and that even the herring shoals of the North Sea are specially characteristic, off the different stretches of coast.

Indeed, a great grievance with certain districts is, that *pu* herrings, from the three emporiums on the Aberdeenshire coast—Peterhead, Aberdeen, and Fraserburgh—have a preference amongst buyers, before those either to North or South. When these fish have spawned and become 'spents,' they gradually lose their more gregarious instincts, and become what were formerly considered a different species, and named unpoetically 'gut-pokes.' This simply meant that they were what is called among salmon 'mending-kelts.' The necessity for food drove them to forage pretty well for themselves, during which period they are the most indiscriminate of feeders, and will not hesitate to devour the young of their own species with sublime indifference. They are then taken readily with unbaited bright hooks, by jigging, so voracious are they. Their cannibalism makes it all the more extraordinary that a fish, throwing only some thirty thousand ova, compared with the millions of its enemy the cod, can still maintain its pre-eminence in multitude. Besides the comparatively local shoals, there are undoubtedly immense pelagic shoals, living mainly in the deeper and more troublous waters, and becoming coarser and more suited to fight the ruder conditions of a pelagic existence. These commonly approach some quiet shore or shallow bank to deposit their spawn on rough ground, and may be readily known by their tougher skins, and a less delicate make than that of their more delicately nurtured brethren. A shoal may long visit an isolated locality without coming into touch with the fishing community; always somewhat conservative, and following orthodox lines.

Such a shoal was discovered some few years ago to the west of the island of Islay, and after having been for some time a little mine of wealth to the locality, attracted the attention of a class of fishermen following a destructive mode of fishing, too little regarding to-morrow. The so-called seine-trawlers, or circle-net fishers, who attack a shoal of fish

instead of lying in wait for them, sweeping them away in millions, regardless of size or condition, cause absolute consternation amongst the finny tribe. But for them the shoals might remain for weeks or months in a locality, giving employment to hundreds of men, and supplying the market with well-chosen drift-net fish of good quality and in best condition. The trawled herring, in any case, is hashed, is irregular, and has the blood lying along the back-bone, and the market is apt to be choked by a reckless and intermittent supply. But, above all, the seine-trawl terrifies the fish, and turns what might be a regular and steady fishery, into a sudden over-supply of inferior fish, followed by their practical disappearance.

We may take this Islay fishery as a fair example of what does, and ought not to, happen. The shoal, in ripe condition to some extent, came in from the outer waters, and if the weather was suitable sought the quiet haven inside Neave Island, towards the head of the comparatively shallow waters of Loch Gruinard, in Islay. Here, probably for a lengthened period, they deposited their spawn, unmolested by man; for boats seldom frequented this exposed coast. The shoal steadily increased until, when accidentally discovered, it had reached important dimensions. At first it was worked by the Portnaguran fishermen, who fished under trying conditions, as they had no facilities for the safety of their boats, and had to draw them high and dry on the Saturday, while they returned to their distant homes on foot for the Sunday. A subscription oil-lamp alone guided them into the difficult and dangerous haven, and the produce of their labours was carted to Port Charlotte or Bruchladich, across the island. Except a few farmhouses, there were no dwellings in the vicinity. But soon private enterprise threw up huts and curing-houses, and a little community sprang up on the spot at the fishing head of the shallow loch. Application was made for the aid of Government to provide lighting and pier facilities; but the question arose: Is there any security that the fishery will prove to be a permanent one? The enemy had begun to appear in force, in the seine-trawlers, and collisions had even taken place between the rival systems. Would the fish return to their spawning-grounds, tormented by the trawl, made foul by decaying fish from overweighted nets, and, worst of all, almost cleared of spawn which, when matured, would have returned to their original place of incubation? They have at least attempted to return, and occasionally succeeded, to their destruction. But they have also been sometimes driven by gales out of their course, and perhaps thus explained the occasional sudden appearance of shoals in new districts. Thus they spread down the Sound of Islay to Portaskaig, and originated new curing stations there along the Sound. Some took refuge in West Tarbert, Jura, and spawned there, as they were at first permitted to do. This occurred mainly through the severe weather that destroyed so many of the fleet some years ago. But it showed them the way there, and the loch was full of sile, or young herring, the following season.

For some years this fishing has kept increas-

ing and spreading, with the fears of the locality also increasing, and the benefits spreading to other quarters. It took some little time for the fact to become accepted that a great new fishing-ground had arisen, towards the end of the fishing season elsewhere. The fine size of the fish also made them especially attractive, and assured of good prices in the London market. So the annual fleet kept increasing, and the seiners more and more regardless, until the fish became so afraid of a net that they would not approach the orthodox drift-net, and only the seines were successful. This fact was advanced as a proof of the value and importance of seine-fishing, while it was only a proof that it had done its work but too well. No doubt this last season, when the fleet was absurdly great for the extent of fishing-ground in safe water, over-fishing of both kinds played havoc with the shoals; but daylight seineing had most to do with the unhappy result. The herring, terrified at the onslaught, spread away up the sound between Jura and Colonsay, and, unable to rid themselves of their spawn, sought the quiet of Lochbuie, in the hope of at last being unmolested. This hope was not to be fulfilled, as they had no sooner been notified as arrived than the Philistines were upon them, aided by steam. Whereas a quiet fishing might have been carried on here for a considerable time, with the reasonable use of the drift-net; two or three days of the seine swept the loch, and drove the remains of the despairing shoal out into deeper waters. A few days and they were marked in Duart Bay, to the north of Mull. And here again a furious assault was made on fish that were of little value for the table by that time, the spawn running freely from the poor persecuted creatures, unable to find a place of rest, or allowed to continue the species that is so valuable to our fishermen, as well directly, as by being the main food of our western marine fauna.

A nation that permits such reckless abuse of its resources, cannot pretend to any proper administration of its fisheries. That reasonable 'black mail' should be levied on every shoal of fish that approaches our shores may be granted; but wholesale slaughter, regardless of to-morrow, ought not to be permitted, or our own proper fish stock treated as if they were some unknown emanation from the unseen deep. The first duty of the new Fishery Districts will probably be to protect such local industries, and prevent the wholesale destruction by stranger crews of what prove, when properly conducted, the very best and surest means of advancing localities in all the comforts and graces of civilisation. The money brought into Islay from this fishery during the last eight years has been most important to this fine, but somewhat isolated, island; and it will be a cruel blow should the fishery be destroyed, as it threatens to be. What has happened has already taught us some lessons. It has shown how new grounds may be stocked by wandering shoals, driven from their usual haunts by stress of weather or regardlessness of man. It has shown how far a shoal will travel in terror before rude processes, no longer necessary with capital in plenty in the industry;

and it has surely made evident the necessity for more stringent supervision of such important and valuable industries. In the meantime what has it taught the herring? We have considerable evidence that the natural spawning-ground of this fish is close to the shore, but it has been driven farther and farther away by persistent persecution until it spawns in depths of many fathoms. It may learn other lessons, and take to deeper waters than the ten or twelve fathoms of the Ballantrae banks, if it does not force us to follow the industry like the Dutchmen of old, out in the deep, where our delicate loch fish is an impossibility. This 'persecuted shoal' of Islay may yet be an object lesson of national value, if properly appreciated.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

CHAPTER X.—IN THE FIELDS.

I GAVE her new music, some books of songs, some books of poetry, and some novels of a kind that I thought she would like. I filled the windows with flowers, inasmuch that Robert groaned: I gave her flowers for the table: every evening I took her on the river for an hour of the fresh strong air which sweeps up with the flow and down with the ebb; and on Saturday I took her for a little journey into the country.

I wanted real country, not cockney country, though that is not to be despised. Isabel was clad, I well remember, in a summer dress of some soft and light material. Perhaps it was not trimmed exactly as a Bond Street dress-maker would approve. She wore a hat which had been bought in the neighbourhood of Aldgate; yet it was a pretty hat; and with a touch of colour round her neck, and a flower at her throat, she looked a very dainty damsel indeed; and oh! the blindness, and the coldness, and the stony-heartedness of her *fiancé*, who would have no kissing, and fondling, and foolishness. In this respect, though we were sprung from the same stock, I am not ashamed to confess that in opinion, not to speak of practice, we were hopelessly at variance.

'Permit me to observe, Isabel,' I remarked, judicially, 'that you look very nice, and that your dress becomes you.'

'Oh!' she coloured with pleasure—she was so unused to compliments, you see. 'I am so glad you like it. If you had not made Robert give up all that work, I should not have found time to make it.'

'Well, I thought of taking you by rather a long journey, if you don't mind that, to Rickmansworth. Then you shall walk through a lovely park that I know of, and then we shall be picked up by a trap and drive to Chenies, there to dine, and go home in the cool of the evening. Will that suit you, Isabel?'

'Anything suits me that suits you, George; only I am afraid'—

'What are you afraid of?'

'I am afraid of you. Oh, not that way'—she did not explain what way—'only you belong to another world, almost. I am afraid

that I shall be such a stupid companion. I don't even talk your language—and you always look so happy. I am ashamed to be seen with any one who looks so happy?'

I laughed. Afraid of me! As if any woman in the world could ever be afraid of me! 'Why,' I told her, 'I go in perpetual awe and adoration of all women; I look happy because you condescend to walk with me. Women are all goddesses—I worship in fear.' So she smiled and resigned herself to fate, and we set off.

From Wapping to Rickmansworth is a long journey; it takes an hour and a half. In the underground Isabel began to talk again about Robert.

'I am ashamed,' she said, 'of having told you what I did last Monday, I am ashamed of feeling so—afraid of Robert. You will think me the most unworthy person in the world when I tell you that it is gratitude, the deepest gratitude that ought to bind us to Robert. Did he never tell you how we came to his house? No? Well, I will tell you—and then you will understand what I mean. It is five years since we came to him. I was sixteen then. We are his cousins. He could not get on with his mother. She was a very grand lady—I remember her—who dressed in black silk and wore a large gold chain and wanted to rule everybody. And Robert was the master, and he intended to be master, in which he was quite right; so they couldn't agree; and his mother went out to her other sons in Tasmania. Then Robert remembered us. Just then it was—oh! a terrible time with us. I used to lie awake crying and praying for help. And Robert brought the help.'

'What was the trouble?'

'Father had a stroke—you see how lame he is—and he couldn't go to sea any more, and there was no money at all.'

'Oh! But that was terrible.'

'Yes. They were trying to get father into the Trinity Almshouse—and I was to go and do something—become a barnaid, perhaps. Then Robert found us out. "Come and live with me," he said—and so we came. I was to be his secretary, and to keep the books and the house.'

'And that you have continued ever since. Yes. And you have never been outside Wapping once all that time?'

'Oh! yes. Now and then I go to Aldgate.'

'Have you been into any kind of society? Have you had any kind of change?'

'No. We have no visitors here. And I have been too busy to think of change.'

'That is just it. You have been too busy. Don't talk to me of gratitude, Isabel. Robert has taken from you more than he has given. Not that he is to be blamed. Robert, you see, is such a strong sort that he never wants any change; and he thinks that nobody else does. Why, you've lost what ought to have been your happiest days. Why, you ought to have been a princess.'

'Please, George'—she stopped me, turning red. 'Remember that whatever I have lost, I have never heard foolish compliments.'

'If you call that foolish. But I refrain. So,

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little one, you entered upon the boat-building business; and you saw Robert, naturally, every day.'

'Yes; all day long.'

'And he—he—I mean, you—presently accepted him.'

She blushed again. 'Yes; he said he must have a wife some time or other, and he would marry me. But he had a great deal to do first, and I must not expect him to—to'—

'I know. The most singular limitation of an engagement on record.'

'If I could make him happy, how could I refuse? Besides, I was afraid to refuse. And we owed everything to him. But it won't have to be for a great while yet—not for years.'

The train arrived at the station. I ordered a conveyance to meet us at Chorley Common, and I took Isabel by a way that I knew through the park.

There is nothing in the world, I believe, lovelier than an English park in early summer. Wild places—lofty mountains, tall peaks, dark ravines, broad glaciers, black forests, cliffs white, cliffs red, cliffs black, touch another note. Then there is the tranquillity; the great beauty of the park fills the soul with rest and calm.

Isabel had never before seen a park. She looked about her with a kind of stupor. There were tall trees, not in lines, but single; all with their lower branches at the same height above the sward—the height, that is, to which the deer can reach; the foliage was at its best; the turf was green and soft and elastic; a skylark was singing up above; a blackbird was repeating his pretty tuneful lay close beside us; there was a confused chatter from the hedge; the buttercups covered the low-lying part; beyond us ran the river, the little river Chess, winding among the meadows. The air that fanned the soft cheeks of the girl breathed refreshment. We were quite alone save for the birds and the trees, and afar off a herd of deer.

'What do you think of it, Isabel?'

She made answer with the simple interjection which is used for everything beyond the power of speech. There is no other word in any language half so useful or half so expressive; because, you see, it expresses every possible form of emotion—love, pain, pleasure, hope, fear, admiration, joy, despair.

'Come,' I said, 'we must not stay too long.'

'Oh! But not to hurry. It is wonderful; to think that these lovely places are all around us and we never see them! George, to live all the time in that corner and never to see these things! Oh, is it life?'

'No, Isabel, it is not life, it is prison. But courage, we have broken prison. The doors are open. We shall see lots of things rare and beautiful now. This is only a beginning.'

So we walked on more slowly, because this part of the park is not very big. In order to show off my country lore I carried on a little running commentary. 'That whistle is the blackbird's; that is the thrush; did you hear the cuckoo? You must run for luck. That is the blackcap; that is the complaint of the willow warbler.'

'You know them all,' she said jealously, 'and I know not a single one. Oh! how ignorant I am of everything—everything!'

'I will teach you. I am sure you will be an apt scholar. You shall learn the flowers, too—the names of all the flowers; I have got some good by being born in the country. I can teach you the birds and their song and their flight; and the flowers, and their seasons, and their history; and the trees and the leaves. We had a country-house once; there was another one near us, with a huge park, where I used to wander with Frances.'

'Who was Frances?'

'Lady Frances was the daughter of the Earl of Clovelly, formerly prime-minister. Her mother was a great political lady. Frances and I were great friends always, and we learned those things when we were children together.'

'Are you engaged to Lady Frances?' she asked sharply.

'Oh! dear, no. There is no question of engagement between us. We are like brother and sister. Frances is a young widow: if she were to marry again, it would be a strong man, full of ambition, who would advance himself and enable her to become what her mother was.'

'She should marry Robert, if she wants a strong man.'

'Indeed, she might do worse. Now, Isabel, this is the wildest place anywhere round London; you are quite in the country; there are no houses to be seen, no roads, no railways, nothing but trees, and grass, and sky, and flowing river. Sit down on this trunk and rest, and don't try to tell me how much you like it.'

We sat down on a fallen tree; the sunshine lay on the rippling waters where the light breeze here and there lifted the surface into a little crest of wave, or where it was broken by the leaping of a fish; there were wild ducks overhead flying in two straight lines that joined at a single duck, to make an angle of thirty degrees—not that Isabel asked what angle they made—and higher up was flying a pair of heron, their long legs stretched out behind them.

No one, I say, was in the park: nor was there any sign or sound of any human creature: the leaves of spring were at their earliest and their loveliest: the chestnuts were in bloom: and the girl sat with hands folded in her lap, carried away by the spectacle of the abounding joy of spring. For the first time in all her youth she felt the joy of life. It fell upon her in waves: it made her faint: it filled her with a new emotion. Shall we ever become too old to remember the joy of life in adolescence—the yearning after we know not what—the happiness of the sunshine, the air, the water, the green trees, the birds—the fullness and the sweetness and the innocence of it—the consciousness of understanding for the first time what life means—how happy it may be—if the gods permit—how glorious and how abundant are Nature's gifts to bless the living? We cannot thus clothe the thoughts of the young with words: youth is hardly conscious of them. I am sure that Isabel could not describe the

emotions that filled her soul. Words are only possible long after the thing itself is over and done with, and possible no longer. We who are old can never again feel that overwhelming, supreme, passionate joy of life; but we can remember—sometimes. When did it fall upon you, dear reader? Like the Wesleyans, let us exchange experiences. Were you alone? Was there a companion to share your passions? Was it on some bright day in early summer among woods and streams and the song of birds that this sense of an all-abundant nature and a life capable of feeling all, embracing all, receiving all, fell upon you, and carried you for a brief space—a space all too brief—beyond yourself?

Her face was flushed, and her eyes were bright, as that was their wont, her hands were tightly clutched, and her lips were parted. She was in a highly nervous condition when we started. Now she looked like one trying to repress some overmastering emotion.

She sprang to her feet. 'Oh!' she cried, 'I must run: I cannot sit still.' She threw out her arms; she was carried away, she was drunk with the new-born joy of life. 'I must sing.' She lifted up her voice, her clear full voice, and sang—and—wonderful to relate—she sang the words of a hymn:

'O, God of Hosts, the mighty Lord,
How lovely is the place,
Where Thou, enthroned in glory, show'st
The brightness of Thy face!'

'Isabel!' I cried, 'you are transformed!'

She was: not the finest actress in the whole world could so change herself in a moment of time: not the greatest queen of Tragedy could so stand with outstretched arms, with flaming cheek, and parted lips—as if to welcome and to drink in all—all—all that Nature had wherewith to bless the living. It lasted a moment only. Then her arms dropped and the colour went out of her cheek, and I caught her as she fell, and laid her gently on the grass. I ran down to the river and brought back a hat full of water, and touched her forehead with a few drops. She quickly recovered and sat up.

'Where am I? What has happened?' she cried. 'Oh! what has happened?'

'Nothing serious, Isabel. Keep quite quiet. The heat—or the sun—or the strangeness was too much for you. Perhaps you had better lie back for a little.'

'No—no'—she got up. 'I must have fainted. Why did I faint? Oh! I am so ashamed of myself. I cannot understand why I fainted.'

'Well, Isabel, when an ancient Greek met the great God Pan in the forest, he instantly fell dead. So that you ought not to be surprised that you merely fainted when you first saw great Pan's dominion. Will you rest a little longer?'

'No, I am quite recovered. Let us go on for fear I should faint again.'

So we walked on, through the rest of the park and came out close to the common called Chorley. Here the carriage was waiting for us, and we drove the rest of the way.

Isabel was very silent. She lay back in the

carriage looking into the woods as we drove along the road. She was in a mood when the soul needs silence. Had I known that she would be so deeply moved, I think I should have hesitated to bring her to such a place. The mind of a maiden is too delicate an instrument for the rough hand of man. He cannot touch the strings, without fear of something snapping. But her cheek was touched with colour and her eyes with light.

We arrived at Chenies. There is a church here with tombs of the Russells. Isabel took no interest in them. There is an old manor-house, the most beautiful manor-house in England—a gem of a house built of red brick, with creepers all over it and a stately garden; a house to dream of. But Isabel cared nothing at all about the house, and showed no interest or curiosity in the noble House of Russell. There were the ruins of a small Religious House at the back. Isabel took no interest in the monks or nuns, who once lived in this house, nor in the ruins, nor in the little reconstructions of the house which I attempted. But beside the ruins at the back there is a wood, and here we walked in the shade, looking out between the trees at the breadths of sunshine beyond, and up into the branches above at the gleaming sunlight, and between the leaves. She wanted nothing more than just the peace of the wood and the glory of the sunshine.

When I left her at last at her own door: 'We are home again,' she said. 'Thank you, oh! so much. It has come with me all the way home. I hope it will stay with me? Good-night, George.'

What had come with her? I believe she meant the new-born feeling of the beauty and the joy of the world.

CIVIL SERVICE APPOINTMENTS BY NOMINATION.

A VERY large number of posts in the Civil Service are filled by nomination, the appointment of course being made subject to the nominee passing a qualifying examination. Such situations, however, may be offered for competition at the discretion of the head of the department concerned. In this class, which is by no means an unimportant one, we have such appointments as those of prison-warder, postman, storekeeper, and matron, as well as more remunerative situations like those of fishery officer, prison-governor, and vice-consul.

A further class of nomination appointments was provided for by an Order in Council in June 1870, which, while establishing the system of open competition, empowered the Civil Service Commissioners to dispense wholly or partially with examination, on receiving evidence satisfactory to them that the candidate possessed the necessary qualifications. The knowledge and ability deemed requisite are wholly or in part professional, or otherwise peculiar, and not ordinarily to be acquired in the Civil Service. Hence we find such appointments as demonstrator and instructor to the Admiralty, dispenser to the Chelsea Hospital, and trades-warder in

our prisons, made by simple nomination. It is at once seen that it would be neither expedient nor beneficial to fill situations like these by means of either limited or open competition.

In regard to many vacancies, however, the system of limited competition is taken advantage of, candidates being nominated by the heads of the departments in which the vacancies exist. To obtain any situation where nomination is concerned, influence, direct or indirect, is indispensable. The necessary nomination having been secured, the applicant in due course receives notice from the Civil Service Commissioners as to the time and place of examination, the latter being usually in London for all offices in England, Edinburgh for Scotland, and Dublin for Ireland. A considerable period often elapses between the promise of nomination and the day of examination, which of course depends entirely upon the time when the next vacancy in the office occurs. It must be understood that a nomination is not actually made until a vacancy exists. In limited competitions there are usually at least three or four candidates for each post vacant, but the ordeal is on the whole much less severe than when the examinations are open.

One of the most attractive of these limited competitions is that for British Museum assistants. The limits of age are eighteen and twenty, and the examination fee is £4. Right of nomination is vested in the three principal trustees of the museum—namely, the Lord Chancellor, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Speaker of the House of Commons. In addition to the usual subjects of Civil Service examination, candidates are tested in one ancient and in one modern language, and in any other subjects which the trustees may prescribe. These additional scientific or literary subjects vary according to the particular branch of the museum in which the vacancy occurs. On an average there would be from two to four vacancies annually. Second-class assistants receive £120 per annum, which rises to £450, and several assistants receive additional allowances for extra work. In the higher department there are eight assistant-keepers with salaries ranging to £600, and twelve keepers with salaries rising to £750.

Perhaps equally popular situations, and possibly quite as desirable, are clerkships in either House of Parliament. In 1887 the Clerk of the House of Commons, Sir Reginald Palgrave, introduced the system of limited competition. There are usually one or two vacancies annually, and the obligatory part of the examination, besides the usual subjects, embraces Constitutional History and Latin, while the optional subjects include Greek, French, German, and Mathematics, of which subjects the candidate may attempt two only. The examination fee is £6, and the limits of age are nineteen and twenty-five. Clerks between the ages of nineteen and twenty-four, whose parents do not reside in London or the vicinity, must be provided with such a place of residence as shall meet with the approval of the Clerk of the House of Commons. The whole clerical staff in this House numbers thirty-four, and the salaries run from £100, the figure at which a junior begins, to £1000, at

which the remuneration of the principal clerk culminates. The staff of clerks in the House of Lords is smaller, but is recruited in a similar way, the only important difference in the examinations being that French is in this case compulsory, Italian taking its place among the optional subjects. In the House of Lords staff there are eighteen clerks, with salaries running from £100, to that of the chief, who yearly draws £1200. Besides these, many have extra allowances which run from £25 to £450. Vacancies occur but seldom; there has been no appointment made since 1890.

For the situation of paymaster in the navy, the daily rate of pay runs from fourteen to thirty-three shillings. This post is reached through that of assistant-clerk, appointments as such being made by limited competition, with the exception that one candidate is admitted annually on passing a test examination. This candidate is selected by the Board of Admiralty from sons of deserving officers of the navy; all other candidates must be nominated by the First Lord of the Admiralty. Two examinations are held annually; and a fee of £1 is charged. The limits of age are set down as fifteen and seventeen. The test examination includes French and Scripture, while the optional subjects embrace Mathematics, Latin, German, Spanish or Italian, and Elementary Physics. Assistant-clerks get two shillings and sixpence per day, and after one year's service, are rated clerk, on which their pay becomes four shillings. After three years' further service, and on passing a test examination, a clerk becomes assistant-paymaster, when his daily remuneration runs from five to eleven shillings and sixpence.

Before leaving clerkships, we may glance at those of the Foreign Office which are obtained by limited competition. In 1891 it was decided that these appointments should be interchangeable with attachéships in the Diplomatic Service, and the entrance examinations were then made the same. The limits of age are nineteen and twenty-five, and the nomination rests with the Foreign Secretary. The scheme of examination embraces French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Latin, and the History of Europe. In 1892 Shorthand was added by direction of Lord Rosebery, then Foreign Secretary. The examination in modern languages is of a very searching character. Vacancies are few—about four annually—and an examination fee of £6 is demanded. Attachés receive no salary until they serve two years; then they take the place of third secretaries with a salary of £150. Second secretaries receive £300 to £500, while commercial attachés get £1000 to £1300. The prospects of clerks are excellent, for the Diplomatic Service comprises one hundred and thirty-two members, and £1000 is by no means an uncommon salary. There are twenty-six ministers with salaries running from £1250 to £6000, while those of ambassadors vary from £5500 to £9000 a year. It is noteworthy that the British ambassadors now at Washington and Constantinople respectively, commenced their careers as junior clerks in the Foreign Office.

We now come to consider a whole array of inspectorates whose members are admitted by limited competition. The first we may notice

is the Assistant-inspectorship of Mines. The limits of age are twenty-three and thirty-five, and the examination fee is £6. The right of nomination rests with the Home Secretary, and a condition of nomination is that, within five years previous to his appointment, a candidate must have been employed for two years underground in a mine. The principal subject of examination is, of course, theoretical and practical acquaintance with mines and mining. The staff consists of twenty-six assistants, with salaries rising from £300 to £400, and thirteen inspectors, who yearly draw from £600 to £800.

More attractive, because the chances of promotion are trebled, are the Inspectorships of Factories and Workshops. Formerly, persons having no special knowledge of factories were nominated to fill this post, but of late years the appointments have been given to practical men. The chief subjects of examination are a practical acquaintance with factories and workshops, Applied Mechanics, and the Factory and Workshop Acts. About two vacancies occur annually. The limits of age are twenty-one and thirty, but the higher limit is raised to thirty-eight in the case of candidates who have been occupied for seven years in a factory or workshop. Sometimes, as is also the case with Inspectors of Mines, the situations are filled by simple nomination. The staff numbers sixty-nine, and junior inspectors get £200 a year, which rises to £300. First-class inspectors get as much as £500, while there are five sub-inspectors with salaries rising to £700, and one chief-inspector with an income of £1200.

A new class of appointments was established in 1893—that of Assistant-inspector of Factories; and twenty-five of these have since been appointed, while a few vacancies may be expected annually. The subjects of examination are elementary, with the exception that some acquaintance with laws relating to workshops and factories is asked. The limits of age are twenty-one and forty, and the examination fee is ten shillings. The salary commences at £100, and rises by £5 annually to £150.

From inspecting and sub-inspecting mines and factories is an easy transition to assisting to inspect our educational institutions. It is pleasing to note that a very considerable change was recently made in the examination for Assistant-inspectors of Schools. The subjects, beside the usual elementary ones, now include two ancient and two modern languages, and Elementary Mathematics, Chemistry, and Physics. The limits of age are twenty-five and thirty-five, and candidates are selected by the Education Department—nomination virtually resting with the chief-inspectors—from among those certified teachers who are in actual service, and who either have been trained for two years and obtained a 'first division,' or are university graduates. The scale of salary is £150 to £300, with prospects of promotion to sub-inspectorships, with incomes rising to £500. There are one hundred and sixty-two assistants in England, and twenty-one in Scotland. There are about seven vacancies annually. Inspectors in England and Scotland are appointed by simple nomination. In Ireland the scheme of exam-

ination, which has hitherto been very elaborate, is at present under revision.

Considering the troublous times that Ireland has seen, we must allow that the Inspectors in the Royal Irish Constabulary are an important body of men. The staff numbers two hundred and fifty-nine, and the salaries run from those of third-class district inspectors at £125, to those of county inspectors, which rise to £450. Cadets are trained to fill vacancies—which usually number about eight annually—in this force. The right of nomination is vested in the Lord-lieutenant of Ireland; competitions, however, limited to the sons of constabulary officers, are also held. The limits of age are twenty-one and twenty-six; but if a candidate can show specially qualifying service as an officer in the army or navy, or in a police force, he may be admitted up to the age of twenty-eight. A minimum height of five feet six inches is required. The fee for examination is £2, and the subjects include Latin, French, Elementary Principles of Law, and Law of Evidence. Successful candidates must be provided with an allowance of £50 a year to supplement their pay while under instruction.

An important branch of the service yet remains to be noticed—that of the newly-established body of female typewriters. Those who had hitherto been employed temporarily were in 1894 placed upon the permanent establishment of the Civil Service, and typists are now employed in at least a dozen offices.

Candidates must be nominated by the head of the office in which they wish to serve. The limits of age are eighteen and thirty, and the subjects of examination include a few elementary branches and typewriting. The initial salary is sixteen shillings during the first year, which is spent on probation; then seventeen shillings, rising two shillings a week yearly to twenty-five shillings. A superintendent may be appointed in any office where more than two women are employed; and where more than six are employed, two superintendents may be appointed. A superintendent's salary will rise from twenty-six shillings weekly to thirty shillings, and where more than ten are employed, to thirty-five shillings.

There is no doubt but that this branch of civil employment may yet be very greatly extended. Its rise will be anxiously watched by many, among whom, perhaps, we may reckon the typewriter manufacturers.

BILLY BINKS—HERO.

CHAPTER III.

THE week following the visit of the delegate, as just described, was an eventful one. On Monday, our bran-new woolshed, which had been fitted with the latest sheep-shearing machinery, was burned to the ground: on Wednesday, another paddock on the western side of the homestead was fired, and twenty thousand more sheep perished in the flames, while on Thursday, four of our best cows were discovered by one of the overseers hamstringed and dead.

Seeing that matters were growing more and more serious, I got up the best horse we had

on the station, a magnificent animal, as clean bred as Eclipse, standing nearly sixteen hands, and stabled him in a shed adjoining our private kitchen. Here he was kept in continual readiness, for we never knew when we might have to send off to the township for assistance.

In this fashion those long summer days went slowly by. From morning till night we were busily engaged doing the best we could for the stock in the paddocks adjoining the homestead. It was little, however, that we could accomplish even there, while outside a radius of a few miles we were absolutely powerless. The anxiety was awful, and every week the mailman brought us more and more alarming news from other parts of the colony. From him we learned that troops had been ordered up from the capital, and that on two occasions they had been within an ace of coming into actual conflict with the strikers; woolsheds and stations were still being burned in all directions; the piles of two railway bridges had been cut through in hope of destroying the military *en route* to the scene of the worst disturbances; while from another quarter came news that, during her husband's absence from his camp, a non-unionist's wife had been tarred and feathered in broad daylight by some fiends in human shape. Serious rioting had occurred in Charleville and Hughenden, and, it was said, an order had gone forth from the strike executive, in the event of other measures proving futile, to set fire to the country and so burn the squatters out. No one could overestimate the anxiety of the time. At Kalaman we ate our meals with our rifles within reach of our hands, never went beyond the garden fence without revolvers in our belts, while the slightest suspicious noise in the night was sufficient to bring every man out of his bed and into the veranda with his finger on the trigger of his rifle. Those who had wives and children had occasion to be doubly anxious, for who knew what might not happen even in an hour's necessary absence from home. And every day the strain was growing greater. For ourselves the bursting of the storm came even sooner than we expected.

How well I remember that night!

It had been a close sultry day, and as we were all worn out, we went to bed earlier than usual, leaving Jameson, the overseer, on watch. A little before midnight I heard him come along the veranda and tap at my door to let me know that it was my turn to mount guard. I rose accordingly, and having dressed myself, went out into the veranda.

'You've not heard anybody about, I suppose?' I said, as I took possession of the cane chair he had vacated, and propped my rifle against the wall close to my hand.

'Not a soul,' he answered; 'it's all as quiet as the grave. The wind got up a bit about eleven, but it soon died away again, otherwise I've not heard a sound.'

'All right. Now you'd better turn in as soon as you can. Good-night.'

'Good-night,' he answered, and went away to his room.

After he had left me I sat where I was for

nearly an hour, thinking over my troubles, then all being quiet I sauntered down the garden path, through the little wicket-gate, and out past the peppermint hedge towards the buildings in the rear of the homestead. It was a lovely night, bright starlight, with not a sound in the air, save a faint wind rustling in the long grass, and a curlew whistling in a water-hole by the creek. I propped myself against a post of the store veranda and lit my pipe. After a while the kitchen clock struck two, and on hearing it, my smoke being finished, I was in the act of returning to the house to call the next sentry, when, to my horror and astonishment, I heard a noise behind the building. Next moment, out of the darkness rode half-a-dozen men. On the thick dust their horses made no noise, and had I not leapt back into the shadow, they must certainly have seen me. As it was, they passed within half-a-dozen paces of where I stood. It took me some moments to collect my senses, but when I did, I saw that there was a man in command, and that he was busily engaged distributing his men at equal distances round the house.

One glance was sufficient to show me the awkwardness of the position in which I was placed. Unless I could manage to creep across the open space between the sentries, and so reach the house to give the alarm, those inside might be captured without having a chance to defend themselves. At any cost I felt I must get in and warn them.

Now, before proceeding further with my story, I must endeavour to explain to you the lie of the country. In front of the house and on two sides was my private garden, at the rear the kitchen, the well, and the stable we had fitted up for the horse mentioned elsewhere. Round all these buildings ran a stout wire fence shaded by luxuriant peppermint trees. Thus to reach the house from the store, where I now stood, I should have to pass over a broad strip of open ground, crawl through the fence, and then cross the garden without exciting attention. To do this I could see would be an exceedingly difficult business.

To right and left of me, seeming to tower up almost to the clouds, were two sentries. I gauged my distance carefully, and then threw myself down flat upon my stomach, and began to wriggle my way between them. Every few yards I was compelled to stop for breath, and then I lay and listened with my whole being in my ears. But the thumping of my own heart, the rattle of their horses' bits, and the faint sighing of the night wind across the plain, were the only sounds I could hear. But what puzzled me most was the enemy's reason for not making some further move. Their inaction frightened me. (It turned out later that they were only the advance guard of a larger body, and were waiting for the others to come up before commencing operations.)

At last, after what seemed an eternity of crawling, I reached the fence and began to wriggle myself between the wires. Their trembling and rattling brought my heart into my mouth more than once, but seemed to attract no attention from those mysterious black masses

sitting so still and silent in the darkness. As soon as I was on the other side, I rested for a few moments in the shelter of the trees, and then, taking advantage of every bush, and quaking with fear every time a twig snapped or a pebble rattled, I resumed my crawl to the house. At last, breathless and exhausted, I stood within the veranda. Still, the enemy showed no sign of action.

As soon as I recovered myself a little, I made my way to the chief overseer's room. He was sleeping placidly, so taking him by the arm, I shook him till he woke, and then poured into his ears the news of the disaster which had befallen us.

'How many of them are there, do you think?' he asked, when I had finished.

'I'm sure I can't say,' I replied, 'but I should think there are at least a dozen round the house and possibly as many more behind. It's a nasty lookout!'

'You don't intend to give the free-men up to them, I suppose?'

'Of course not. The men have stuck by me and I shall stick by them. If we hand them over, God alone knows what will happen to them. No; our best plan would be to put somebody up on the horse and send him off at once to Karabee, as hard as he can go, for the mounted police. They are camped just outside the township, and, though it's nearly forty miles, a good horseman ought to be able to do it in, say, two hours and a half, or at most three hours. If he gets through all right we should have the troopers here by breakfast-time.'

'Until then we ought surely to be able to keep them at bay.'

'You approve of my plan? I'm glad of that. Now whom had we better send?'

'There are only three of us who could possibly go. It would never do to send one of the free hands. He'd be caught and murdered for a certainty on the way.'

'But we can't spare a man. Look here, why not send Billy? I believe the young rascal would prove trustworthy, and there's no doubt he can ride as none of us can.'

'Do you think it is wise to trust so much to so small a boy?'

'I'll give him a note to take. Yes, I believe we can trust Billy.'

'Then let us go and wake him at once.'

Together we went down the passage to the little cubbyhole where Billy had slept since his promotion to the house. He lay curled up in his blankets, like a dormouse in his nest, fast asleep, with the butt of his beloved revolver peeping from beneath his pillow. When we woke him, his surprise was most comical; he sat up, rubbing his eyes and blinking like a young opossum.

'Billy,' I said sternly, as soon as I saw he was sufficiently awake to understand, 'do you think you are to be trusted?'

'I dunno, what for?' replied Billy with his habitual caution.

'To go on the chestnut with a letter to the Inspector of police at Karabee. The unionists are out, and if they catch you they'll skin you alive. If you get through you'll save—well, you'll save the baby's life and ours too. If

you don't, we'll all be dead by breakfast-time. Save us, Billy, and I'll give you Gipseys's foal, and anything else you like to ask me.'

Billy hesitated for a moment and then, as if an idea had struck him, said: 'Will yer let me take the baby out for to play by the creek?'

'Yes—you shall take him out.'

'True as ever?'

'True as ever!'

'Then I'll go just as soon as I've got on my trousers.'

'You're not afraid?'

'No, I ain't afraid!'

I helped him to complete his attire, while the overseer went out into the veranda to reconnoitre. As soon as the boy was ready I told him to remain where he was till I called him, and then, with the overseer at my heels, crept softly down the central passage and across the yard to the horse's stable. The noble beast was lying down when we opened the door, but on seeing us he rose to his feet with a scramble.

'Are you aware that they have posted men at both the gates?' asked my companion as he handed me the bridle. 'How on earth will Billy get out?'

'I don't know,' I replied, 'but we'll find a way for him somehow, even if he has to jump the bare wire. We'll bind this brute's feet with flannel and take him through the house to the front veranda; the fence is lower on that side, and the sentries are farther apart. Give me up that girth.'

In less than five minutes we had the horse saddled and ready. His feet were swathed in bandages, so that he made no noise when we brought him out of the stable and took him across the yard to the house. To persuade him to mount the three small steps that led into the back veranda was a matter of some difficulty, but this once accomplished, he walked through the house as if it were the entrance to his own loose box. But in spite of our precautions, his muffled tread was sufficiently loud to do one bit of harm; it roused my wife and brought her with a frightened face to her bedroom door.

'Oh! what is the matter?' she cried on finding the animal almost filling the little passage.

'What are you going to do with that horse?'

'Hush, dear,' I whispered, 'don't speak so loud. The unionists have surrounded the house and I am going to send Billy off to Karabee for the police. Go back into your room, there's a good girl, and keep quiet. Above all, don't show a light.—Now, Jameson, bring Billy here.'

The overseer disappeared in the direction of the boy's room, and I was left alone with the impatient horse, who immediately began to toss his head and to paw the floor as if wondering what on earth this extraordinary conduct might mean. As I have already said, he was a fine animal, quite thoroughbred, standing upwards of sixteen hands, and as fast, if not faster, than anything in the district. Besides this, he was as surefooted as a cat, had the courage of a lion, and could jump like a stag.

In less than a minute Jameson returned with Billy; the free hands who had learned what

had happened accompanied them, and stared at the horse as if they had never seen such an animal before.

'I've changed my mind about the note, Billy,' I said, as the youngster came to my side. 'If they caught you, it would never do for any writing to be found on you, so you must make your way to Karabee as best you can, and as soon as you get there, ask for the Inspector of police. Tell him that Kalam station has been stuck up by the unionists, and beg him to come over as fast as his troopers can ride. Say we think we can hold out till breakfast-time, but not a minute longer. Now let me hear what message you are going to give him!'

Billy replied after his own fashion, and when he had finished, I opened the front door and led the horse out, across the veranda and down into the garden. Then the bandages were removed from his feet, and he was ready for his journey.

It was not until Billy was about to be hoisted into the saddle that I discovered he had ornamented himself with my best pair of spurs. I did not stop, however, to inquire how he had obtained them, but lifted him up and arranged his stirrup leathers to his satisfaction.

'Now listen to me,' I said. 'The unionists are all round the garden fence and at the gates, so you'll have to be careful how you go. You know that the horse can jump, so you must take him across the tennis-court, and at the fence between the two peppermint trees that were broken last week. Jump at the post, he'll clear it, then head across the plain for the Twenty Mile Crossing. Don't spare him on the way, and remember that you're trusted to-night to save us all. Now go, and God bless you.'

For a moment we had a view of the queer little figure perched like a monkey on the top of the big horse, then there was a wild plunge, a clatter of hoofs upon the garden walk, a rush in the darkness, and next moment a shrill little voice crying 'Over.' This was followed by a rattling of fence-wires, a sudden silence, and then the sound of steady galloping on the plain beyond. This comforting noise, however, was soon drowned in the shouts of the enemy, and one rifle-shot. But Billy, we knew, was well out of danger by this time and riding for our lives and his own to Karabee.

HIDDEN TREASURE.

STORIES of hidden treasures have always possessed a mysterious charm, and held a prominent place in the romance and traditions of most countries. But, unfortunately, in many cases such tales are not only wanting in corroborative proof, but must be regarded as more or less apocryphal, founded on little or no basis of fact. But that all kinds of treasures lie concealed in the strangest and most unobtrusive spots cannot be doubted; especially as, in years gone by, the earth oftentimes was the bank to which owners confided their money and valuables, and it would be impossible to say how much wealth lies hid. Such a practice

was only natural when it is remembered how, in consequence of civil commotions, many a home was in danger of being robbed of its most costly belongings. This circumstance would account for the secretion of treasure hoards in buildings, traditions relating to which are associated with many of our old family mansions. According to an entry given by Pepys in his *Diary*, a large amount was supposed to be buried in his day, and he gives an amusing account of the hiding of his own money by his wife and father when the Dutch fleet was supposed to be in the Medway. And a curious old story is told by Thomas of Walsingham, which dates as far back as the fourteenth century. A certain Saracen physician came to Earl Warren to ask permission to kill a dragon which had its den at Bromfield, near Ludlow, and had committed great ravages in the earl's lands. The dragon was overcome, but it transpired that a hoard of gold lay hid in his den. Some men of Herefordshire went by night to dig for the gold, and had just reached it when the retainers of the Earl of Warren captured them and took possession of the money for the earl.

A legend of this kind was long associated with Bransil Castle, a stronghold of great antiquity about two miles from the Herefordshire beacon. The tale goes that it was moated round, and watched over by a black crow—presumed to be an infernal spirit—in charge of a chest of money till discovered by the rightful owner. This chest, it is added, could not be dislodged without the mover being in possession of Lord Beauchamp's bones. Similarly at Hulme Castle, formerly a seat of a branch of the Prestwich family. The hoard was generally supposed to have been hidden either in the hall itself, or in the grounds adjoining, and was said to be protected by spells and incantations. Some years ago the hall was pulled down, but although considerable care was taken to search every spot, no money was discovered. In the same way Stokesay Castle, Shropshire, was reported to be possessed of a chest of treasure secreted in its vaults, but, as is only too often the case, no one has ever succeeded in discovering it. According to a local tradition the chest stands in the vaults still, and no one will ever be able to get possession of the chest till the key is found; and, as it is said in the neighbourhood, 'it never will be found, let folks try as much as they please.' A romantic story is told of Blenkinsopp Castle, which has long been haunted by a 'white lady.' It seems that its owner, Bryan de Blenkinsopp, had an inordinate love of wealth which ultimately wrecked his fortune; for his wife in a fit of anger had a chest of gold concealed that took twelve of the strongest men to lift. Filled with remorse for her undutiful conduct, the spirit of the unhappy woman is supposed to

wander amongst the crumbling ruins of the old castle, mourning over the accursed wealth of which its rightful owner was defrauded.

These treasure-legends differ largely in detail. At Addleborough, Yorkshire, for instance, there is the story of the giant who one day made a vow that he would carry his chest of gold over Addleborough in spite of God or man. But the coffer fell from his shoulders, and forthwith Stainrag rose up and covered it, till some fortunate person shall see a face with the form of a hen and an ape, and without speaking shall draw out the long-buried hoard. Immediately above Churchill is the remarkable encampment of Dolbury, of which a local rhyme as old as Leland's days, makes it the depository of hid treasure, reminding us that :

If Dolbury digged were
Of gold should be the share.

In Ireland there are numerous legends of the same sort, and there are few old ruins in and about which excavations have not been made, at some time or another, in the expectation of finding hidden money; in some instances the consequence has been the destruction of the building which has been actually undermined. About three miles south of Cork, near the village of Douglas, is a hill known as Castle Treasure, where 'a crock of gold' of immense value was supposed to be concealed. Much excitement was caused, some years ago, by the discovery of a rudely-formed clay urn, and two or three brazen implements; a circumstance which attracted for many months crowds to the spot. But, according to the popular belief, it is always a very difficult task to exhume such buried treasure, as some uncanny influence generally is experienced. There is an old legend current in County Meath that when the Danes departed, they hid large quantities of gold, still guarded by dogs and cats. There is a tradition that in a little round room in the moat of Damos are nine kegs of gold guarded against all comers by a black dog as large as a calf, which has a white spot on its side. Whoever, it is said, intends to get the gold must first kill the dog by stabbing it three times in the white spot. Again, on the banks of a northern river, and near a small eminence, writes a correspondent of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 'is a beautiful green spot, on which two large moss-covered stones over six hundred feet apart are shown. A local legend says that two huge crocks of gold lie buried under these conspicuous landmarks, and that whenever a persistent effort has been made to dig round and beneath them, a monk has appeared in full habit, carrying a cross in his hand to warn off sacrilegious offenders.' But many of these stories, as it has been observed, vary little in their details, beyond the actors and localities; although, in

years past, treasure-hunting has become by reason of them an important business with many of the Irish peasantry.

In the south of Scotland, there has long been a tradition that vast treasures are hidden away beneath the ruins of Hermitage Castle—one of the most famous of the border keeps in the days of its splendour—but as they are supposed to be in the keeping of the Evil One, they are considered beyond redemption. At different times, various efforts have been made to dig for them, yet 'somehow the elements always on such occasions contrived to produce an immense storm of thunder and lightning, and deterred the adventurers from proceeding, otherwise, it is said, the money would long ago have been found.' Scotland has numerous legends of this description, some of which have been incorporated into its popular rhymes. Thus, on a certain farm in the parish of Lesmahagow, from time immemorial there existed a tradition that underneath a very large stone was secreted a vast treasure in the shape of 'a kettleful, a bootful, and a bull-hide full of gold,' all of which have been designated by the peasantry in the neighbourhood, 'Katie Nevie's hoord,' having given rise to the following doggerel :

Between Dillerhill and Crossford
There lies Katie Nevie's hoord.

There is a popular notion that underneath Largo Law in Fife there is a very rich mine of gold, which up to the present time has never been properly searched for. So convinced are, or were, the peasantry of the truth of this story, that, whenever the wool of a sheep's side happens to be tinged with yellow, they maintain that it has acquired this colour from having lain above the gold of the mine. There is also a legendary belief that there is concealed at Tamleuchar Cross, in Selkirkshire, a highly valuable treasure, the situation of which is thus described by a popular rhyme :

Atween the wat grund and the dry
The gowd o' Tamleuchar doth lie.

For many ages past, a pot of gold is reported to have lain at the bottom of a pool beneath a fall of the rivulet underneath Craufurdland Bridge, about three miles from Kilmarnock. The last attempt made to recover this treasure was by the Laird of Craufurdland himself, who, at the head of a party of his domestics, emptied the pool of its contents by damming up the water, and had heard their instruments clink on the kettle, when a voice was heard saying :

Pow, pow!
Craufurdland tower's in a low.

Whereupon the party left the scene, but the fire was only a scare, and on returning to renew their operations they found the water falling over the linn in full force. According to Dr Chambers, 'a later and well-authenticated effort to recover the treasure was interrupted by a natural occurrence in some respects similar.' But legends of treasures concealed at the bottom of wells are of frequent occurrence; and the 'white ladies' who dwell in the lakes,

wells, and seas of so many countries, are owners of vast treasures, which oftentimes cause many a hazardous enterprise. A local tradition tells us that, in a pool known as Wimhill Pond at Acton, Suffolk, is secreted an iron chest of money, and that if any one throw a stone into the water, it will ring against the chest; a male white figure having been heard on several occasions to cry in accents of distress, 'That's mine!' And a legend current in Shropshire, mentions an old buried well, at the bottom of which is a large hoard, which has long been supposed to lie hidden, or as a local rhyme expresses it:

Near the brook of Bell
There is a well
Which is richer than any man can tell.

Similar legends prevail to a large extent abroad, and 'The Isle of Yellow Sands' derives its chief interest from the traditions and fanciful tales which are related by the Indians concerning its vast hoards of mineral treasures. Its shores, it is said, are covered with a heavy, shining yellow sand, which 'they are persuaded is gold, but that the guardian spirit of the island will not permit any to be carried away.' A great many years ago, it is reported that some sailors, driven by severe stress of weather upon the island, put a large quantity of the glittering treasure in their boats, and attempted to carry it off; but a gigantic spirit strode into the water, and in a tone of thunder peremptorily commanded them to bring it back, or else punishment would overtake them:

Listen, white man, go not there!
Unseen spirits stalk the air;
Ravenous birds their influence lend,
Snakes defy, and kites defend—
Touch, then, not the guarded lands
Of the Isle of Yellow Sands.

Likewise Drake in his *Legends of New England* tells how the fishermen on the Isles of Shoals used to affirm that spirits watched over certain buried treasures on Appledore Island; and Sir Walter Scott says the Buccaneers occasionally killed a Spaniard or a slave, believing that his ghost would haunt the spot, and keep away treasure-hunters:

Trust not, would his experience say,
Captain or comrade with your prey,
But seek some charnel, when at full,
The moon gilds skeleton and skull;
There dig, and tomb your precious heap,
And bid the dead your treasure keep.

Kill some slave
Or prisoner on the treasure grave,
And bid his discontented ghost
Stalk nightly on his lonely post.

In the same way, the Peruvian Indians have many of these treasure-legends, and maintain that the rich hoards of wealth concealed in emerald mines are specially guarded over by evil spirits; and Stevenson, speaking of the emerald mine in the neighbourhood of Los Esmeraldos, writes: 'I never visited it owing to the superstitious dread of the natives, who assured me it was enchanted, and guarded by a dragon which poured forth thunder and lightning on those who dared to ascend the river.' *The Ceylon Times*, in a paper on the

subject, says that 'it is the belief of all Orientals that hidden treasures are under the guardianship of supernatural beings. The Singhalese, however, divide the charge between demons and cobra da capellos. Various charms are resorted to by those who wish to gain the treasures, the demons requiring a sacrifice. Blood of a human being is the most important, but, as far as it is known, the Cappowas have hitherto confined themselves to the sacrifice of a white cock, combining their blood with their own, drawn by a slight puncture in the hand or foot.' Instances of this kind might be easily multiplied, so widespread is the legendary belief in the existence of wealth secreted in the earth; and which only too frequently defies discovery. And yet, as is well known, at one time or another, many an expedition has been organised to recover what must be regarded as treasures of a purely mythical character. Hence, it is no matter of surprise that such searches have been only too frequently undertaken in vain, large sums of money having been thrown away after an utterly bootless enterprise.

On the Continent legends of hidden treasures are equally numerous, and are found under a variety of forms. According to a Danish tradition, at Daugstrup, not far from Viborg, there is a barrow under which a large copper kettle full of money is supposed to be concealed. On one occasion some peasants had nearly succeeded in unearthing this treasure, when one of them forgetting to keep silence let it slip; and, although many efforts have been made to recover it, they have never been attended with success. In digging up such hidden treasure the strictest silence is necessary, for as Oehlenschläger says in his poem of *The Treasure Digger*:

But if a word thou utter
It vanishes again.

The little island of Fnuur is said to contain vast treasures which, in days gone, were thought to be under fairy guardianship. And even nowadays when the shepherds place their ears to the ground they fancy they can hear invisible beings locking and unlocking the secreted money chests. To quote a further instance, another legend tells how in a valley called Lodal, a light was seen burning every night. It happened that a Holsteiner came to the place, it having been revealed to him in a dream that on the spot where a light was to be seen burning he should dig and find a treasure. Accordingly, he dug and found in the earth a huge copper kettle full of gold, of which he took possession, but from that time the light ceased to burn.

Space will not permit us to do more than allude to a further kind of treasure-legends, whereby all sorts of hidden wealth are said to be revealed at certain periods of the year. Thus Russian traditions tell how at midnight, on the eve of the Epiphany, wondrous treasures are disclosed to certain favoured mortals, a belief which formerly prevailed in this country in connection with Midsummer-day. But ideas of this kind form an extensive field of legendary lore, and deserve to be separately

treated; the purpose of the present paper having been more especially to enumerate some of the treasure-legends associated with certain localities.

MY TADPOLES.

It may seem to many a curious taste, but I am quite devoted to frogs, and in the early spring I always try to become the happy possessor of a lump of their spawn. Other members of the household look upon me as a harmless lunatic, call my treasures 'messes,' and there is a tendency on the part of the family nose to turn heavenwards in scorn; but one gets used to such lack of sympathy in time, and year after year the broad window-sill in my bedroom supports a large bell glass, containing my strange pets.

It was the 25th of March, last year, before I could procure any spawn. But in other seasons I have found it quite a month earlier. At first it is merely an irregular mass of transparent eggs, each one perfectly round and with a black spot in the centre. In about two days the spots lose their circular form, and every day become slightly longer, until it is easy to distinguish the head from the tail; and in their impatience to taste the joys of freedom, the tadpoles twist and turn quite merrily. By the 4th of April they were free, and then began a startling proof of the statement that Nature never wastes anything, for the newly-escaped babies promptly set to work to eat the jelly which had hitherto formed their cradle. At this stage they are more like animated tea-leaves than anything else. All day long, their tails—I might almost say their whole bodies, for it is hard to decide where the tail begins—are wagging, and all day long the gelatinous mass is becoming less and less; only at night are they still, and then even the proximity of a lighted candle fails to rouse them. Their breathing is now carried on by means of branchiæ, or external gills like branching whiskers, which are situated on either side behind the head. In about a week one branchia disappears; I believe every one of my large family—there were about one thousand of them—lost his right whisker first. In some seasons the left has been the first to go, but all the tadpoles in the same piece of spawn seem actuated by the same laws, and what one does, they all do. Two days later, the second branchia vanishes. They do not drop off, but become absorbed into a cavity behind the head which is closed by a flap of skin, and now for the remainder of his tadpole life each little animated tea-leaf breathes with covered gills—ultimately superseded, in the full-grown frog, by lungs.

Strictly speaking, all aquatic specimens should be kept in water as nearly resembling their natural habitat as possible, but tadpoles make their homes in stagnant water which is too strongly scented to be welcomed in a bedroom or sitting-room; so I provide my children with the kind I should prefer living in myself, and having thus deprived them of countless dainty morsels on which they would naturally fatten, I have to find some substitute, or the tragedy of the Kilkenny cats would be enacted over again. So small pieces of meat are hung over

the edge of the glass by means of a piece of cotton, and allowed to rest on the surface of the water where the tadpoles attack it greedily. It can hardly be said that they eat the meat, but they suck away the nourishing part of it and leave only the fine thread-like foundation. I have fed them on various kinds, and found them equally pleased with all except veal. My solitary attempt with the fatted calf was not happy. Perhaps, like ourselves, tadpoles suffer from indigestion. Mine were certainly seriously indisposed after dining on roast veal, and they lay on the water as if their lives had suddenly become a burden to them—some died, and were at once devoured by their more robust comrades.

A wonderful spirit of tidiness seems to pervade the tadpole world. They always eat whatever has become useless—their own eggs, their superfluous companions; even those who are only weakly are cleared out of the way, and the victims take it all as a matter of course. I have disturbed a strong member of the community just as he had begun to dine off the tail of a weaker brother, but the sufferer has not troubled to escape—he simply waited till the fratricide returned to complete his deadly work. For some time there is no grave change in the tadpoles. They simply grow and become so far transparent that their internal mechanism, which consists of one coil of intestines, is plainly visible. When, however, they are about three months old, a careful observer can distinguish a tiny foot on either side of the base of the tail. These grow slowly, but seem unable to move independently until shortly before the border land is passed which leads to perfect froghood. The hind legs have reached their full size before the front ones appear, and while the feet grow slowly, the hands are ready-made and can be used at once. For a day or two they can be seen under the skin before they venture forth, and their possessor is very restless and excited. He rushes madly about, jostling his comrades and no doubt being voted a bore; then a more vigorous effort breaks the skin, and the tiny hand and arm appear. There seems some rule about the order of precedence here, as there was when the whiskers went, for this year my tadpoles almost without exception had their right hands some hours before the left, while on previous occasions I have had an entirely left-handed crew.

Now it behoves the tadpole fancier to be vigilant, for almost simultaneously with the acquisition of the second arm, the infant's tail begins to 'dwindle'—I know of no better expression to suit the case. The tail literally grows shorter, and before it has quite disappeared, the tadpole changes his mode of breathing once again and uses lungs; then, of course, he requires air, and, strange as it may seem, there is nothing which drowns more easily than a young frog. As soon, therefore, as they show the second hand, I catch them and take them to some place where they disport themselves on land or in the water as may seem good to them. It is better to do this than to risk their lives out of curiosity concerning the conclusion of the dwindling process.

Another danger awaits them now, a danger that lies in the increased voracity of their kinsfolk and acquaintance. As soon as any luckless tadpole has four legs, his less forward brethren slay him and suck his composition away, so that my first glance in the morning frequently showed me three or four corpses which had been done to death during the night—they were but shadows of frogs, films with arms and legs, that floated like wan ghosts, and cried to me to avenge their murder. So much of this cannibalism went on that it seemed to me cruel to keep them any longer. Accordingly, one fine morning in August, when there were still about one hundred bipeds left, I carried them off to a shallow pond and washed my hands of them. There the two-legged ones could still remain in the water, while those more precocious were enabled to climb on to something solid, as soon as Nature warned them that henceforth they must be children of earth, and only occasionally return to that other element which had been their nursery.

OLD SCORES.

AN EPISODE OF GRAVELOTTE.

By S. CLEMENT SOUTHAM.

'RAIN!' said the captain, with a grim smile upon his scarred face. 'You call this rain that we have had. Blitzen! You should have been with us at Lauterbach. Ach! That was a night to be remembered; I feel as if I could not get the ache out of my bones yet. We were not seasoned then, and with our bivouac fires barely alive, rain, as though Heaven's windows were opened, and a bitter wind. We sat and shivered and longed for the morning which would, we hoped, bring us food. When morning came, things were not much brighter as we gathered ourselves from the soaked and yielding earth and fell in our places!' The captain took a long and hearty pull at his glass beer-tankard, and puffed complacently at the long and looped Alsatian pipe which hung from under his thick moustache.

The evening sun shone brightly over the great Place Stanislas at Nancy, making the helmets of the German guard at the hotel-deville glitter like wood sparks, and tinging rosily the handsome embossed gates and ferny miniature waterfalls.

It was the early summer of the year 1872, and the cafés swarmed with soldiers, a host of different uniforms passing as we sat; the sombre Hanoverian, the green of the Wurtemberger, and the handsome scarlet and silver of the Queen's Hussars, mixed with the blue, dark or light, of the Prussian and Bavarian, and jostled with all the carelessness of conquerors the few French who were passing. As my companion put down his tankard, the sentry's stentorian lungs sang out '*Heraus!*' and in a moment the guard-house was emptied of white-trousered, sturdy-looking fellows, who presented arms as a stern soldierly veteran with a gray moustache rode into the Square, attended by a single aide.

'Manteuffel,' whispered the captain, who had risen from the little white-topped table and stiffened like a military pointer as the general

passed and acknowledged his salute. He sat down and rubbed the curious cross scratches which decorated his face, as if the process of tattooing had been commenced and abandoned uncompleted by a peculiarly energetic tribe of Indians.

'You are looking at my scars,' said he, with a grim smile. 'You would like to hear how I gained them? Well, another bock each and I will tell you.'

'It was at Gravelotte, in that never-to-be-forgotten August, that we were lying concealed in the Bois des Oignons, ready to carry out the plans of our commander, which, if they had succeeded, would have caught Bazaine in as pretty a trap as was ever set. Under cover of the night our regiment, with others, had occupied this position, while a pretended attack was made in order to induce the French to advance from their strong position at Moskau and St Hubert, so that we might cut them hopelessly off from a retreat to Metz under the shelter of the big guns of St Quentin. The plot failed to draw out the enemy, so Steinmetz, with that old fellow you have just seen riding by, was obliged to carry out the plan they held in case of failure—namely, an attack in force. However, there we lay in the wood, ready for orders to advance, and hoping for nothing short of the triumphal capture of Bazaine and his army. Ach! Well, in these glorious expectations we were then doomed to be disappointed! Suddenly the puff of several field-guns from the Thionville road showed too clearly that the trick was discovered, and shell after shell plumped into the wood, knocking white splinters from the trees and driving us out like a stirred wasps' nest. Concealment was no longer useful, and away we went to join in the general attack.'

'Many a time at Heidelberg, when I was a student with little care on my shoulders, I longed to take my place in the war-ranks, but a few hours under arms, with the bits of shrapnel whirring by your ears, and the spinning bullets knocking up the dust around you, alters your views of warfare very considerably, however fond you may be of the sound of the drum. There is many a one, with untarnished name for courage, whose private thoughts have run somewhat in the strain of Schiller's Maximilian:

Den blut'gen Lorbeer geb' ich hin mit Freuden
Für's erste Veilchen das der März uns bringt,*

while for no single moment did they think of shirking their duty.

'I don't remember much of the fight. I can call to mind scrambling over some rough uneven ground, with the white puffs of the French chassepots in front, and the ugly little bullets humming by our ears like a swarm of gnats. Now and then a shell would go screaming over our heads, or plunge into the ground, in some cases harmlessly, in others blowing up a small volcano of earth and iron; but luckily the French range was bad, most of the shells

* How gladly would I give the blood-stained laurel
For the first violet of the leafless Spring.
Coleridge's Translation.

pitching some distance behind us and many not exploding from defective fuses. And so our regiment pushed on, leaving a trail of bullet-stricken behind us: you English say that we Germans have no life in us, no "brio" as they say in music, but, my friend, if you had seen the battle-light in German eyes, and the swift rush of a strong attack, you would know that we are not the sleepy automatons we are thought to be.

'One moment I was shouting and scrambling forward, and the next one I was down with my hands fuller of Mother Earth than I usually keep them. I knew well, as I lay there, left behind by the advance, and striving to beat off a faint deadness which crept over me, that a chassepot bullet had lodged in my side, and for a few moments the blue sky seemed to turn round, with the blazing sun above like a wheel of fire. I opened my eyes after a time, feeling horribly sick and glad to lie still, after a single effort to move. Well, the ambulance found me at last, and carried me away; and, as the wound seemed dangerous, though thanks to a good constitution and a clever extraction of the bullet, it afterwards healed very quickly, I was taken to a sort of shed where the bearers laid me down, and hurried off again after they had made a hasty temporary bandage and given me some water. Three or four more German soldiers were stretched there also, lying on a rough litter of straw, but they were either dead or insensible, and the only sound was the long-drawn hissing breath, punctuated with hiccoughs as regularly as clock-ticks, of one shot through the lungs and bleeding inwardly. Outside there was a distant rattle and boom of the fight, but it seemed to belong to a far-off world, and myself and the little knot of compatriots were as if cut off hopelessly from life and motion. I lay half-consciously watching the dancing notes in a long ray of sunlight through the shuttered window, and my thoughts were back in Berlin, when I heard a step at the door and was glad, hoping for a surgeon and better aid.

'But, when I looked up at the intruder, it was no friendly surgeon's face I saw, but that of a lean old hag, stooping over me and gazing intently, while the countless wrinkles on her yellow face worked and quivered like seething metal. Then a skinny claw tightened on my throat, though faint and despairing I strove to call for help and to fight off the deadly weakness that bound me. Her thin hooked nose was thrust forward, and the peaked gray chin muttered and mumbled in some inarticulate sentences, while the deep-sunk eyes under her heavy white eyebrows glowed, or seemed to glow, like a demon's. Suddenly she broke into a low cackling laugh as she drew back her hands from my throat, and watched the feeble efforts I made to beat her off with my poor half-paralysed fingers. Then the other hand raised something slowly in the air, and I saw it to be a small iron fork, such as she might have used while cooking, and her voice grew louder so that I could hear what she was screaming at me in that abominable tongue of hers, which I knew fairly well. "You may be a fine soldier now, beau garçon, but wait until I have those little eyes of yours! You will

never see again the beautiful land you are striving to take from us; you will never slay the poor Jean and Jacques because they will not have their country defiled by your invading feet!" *Himmelsdonner!*" said the captain, wiping the beads of perspiration from his forehead, 'no nightmare was ever so frightful as this old witch of the Brocken, with her yellow wrinkled face shaking with fury, and the awful truth of the impending fate dawning upon me! Ach! I sometimes dream that scene again, but I prefer the "Bullet-squirt" on a dozen battlefields.

'She stood looking at me a moment while I faintly called for help and drew my half-useless arm over my face, then down came the fork, but it struck into the sleeve of my tunic. Then she seemed mad, and, screaming with fury, she struck again and again, tearing my cheek and forehead with these lines which I shall carry until the fives play the funeral march over me. With one hand striving to tear my arm away, and the other clutching her diabolical weapon, she exerted all her strength; but the frenzy of despair seemed to nerve me afresh, and, though my face was ploughed in many a furrow, she had not reached my eyes. It was only, I suppose, a moment's struggle, probably not a tenth part of the time I take to tell it, and then the sickness crept over me again, when, as I felt my arm relax and it was wrested away from my face, something fell over me, a warm stream flowing on my up-turned hands, and then—nothing more, that I can remember, until I found myself lifted up and life and sense coming drifting back under the aid of a soldier's canteen.

'Dark-blue uniforms bent over me, and faces black with the soil of battle, but kindly enough. One was just slipping a cartridge into his rifle, while another supported my head on his shoulder and wiped the blood from my face. "Just in time," said the soldier, as he laid me down again, and they flung the corpse among the straw; "it was the mercy of Heaven we came up when we did. Ach! the witch! What an escape!" And so you see, my friend,' said the captain with a smile, as he rose from his seat and tucked his scabbard under his arm, 'my Old Scores were not very old before they were paid off, were they?'

THE VALUE OF A SLAVE.

WE are indebted to the courtesy of a correspondent for the following relic of slave-owning days, in the shape of an 'Inventory and appraisal of all and singularly the goods and chattels, rights and credits of C— H—, late of the parish of Vere, Esquire, deceased.' In looking over some family papers, this last will and testament of a Jamaica landowner turned up, along with the inventory. The will is dated 9th September 1805, and the value of the whole estate was somewhat over thirty thousand pounds. Our correspondent says: 'I read with a curious interest the following long list of slaves, male and female, and their

* A woman was actually hanged, during the war, for perpetrating a similar outrage upon a Bavarian officer.

appraised values. I think it not unlikely that other people may do the same, thankful likewise that the day of such things has gone by. It is strange and distressing to us to think of our fellow-creatures having been inventoried along with such subjects, as fifty-six cows at twenty-five pounds each; a chaise, forty pounds; nineteen mares at twenty pounds each; two old looking-glasses (not valued); a quantity of Guinea corn to feed negroes (not valued), with silver table and tea-spoons.' The total value of nearly one hundred male and female slaves comes out at something like eight thousand pounds. We have not space for the complete list, but quote some specimens of the names and value, which range from five pounds for a year-old child, to two hundred pounds for a healthy slave in his prime.

MALE SLAVES.	Age.	Value.
John White.....	26	£200
Frank.....	23	160
Johnny.....	26	130
W. Crow.....	42	100
Hannibal.....	48	80
Cæsar.....	40	80
Cato (deformed).....	24	50
Colin (blind).....	24	...
London (runaway).....	43	...
Captain.....	3	40
Cadzoe.....	3	30
Tom.....	2	10
Hannah's Edward.....	1	5

FEMALE SLAVES.		
Dolly.....	25	£135
Quashiba.....	19	130
Rosetta.....	17	130
Daphne.....	25	125
Long Charlotte.....	44	80
Beniba.....	29	80
Penney.....	31	75
Nelly.....	4	50
Chance.....	27	40
Priscilla.....	4	30
Bell.....	4	30
Delia.....	3	20
Eliza.....	1	10

When the slave-trade was in full swing, it was a common thing for merchants on the west coast of Africa to purchase a cargo of rum and tobacco and give slaves in exchange. The price of a prime slave when Mungo Park was amongst the Mandingoes was from nine to twelve minikallies, the equivalent of one minikalli being something like the following: eighteen gun-flints, forty-eight leaves of tobacco, twenty charges of gunpowder, and a cutlass. Dr Livingstone, than whom no explorer did more to expose the ravages of the slave-raider, says he never knew of an African parent selling his own offspring. When on his first great missionary journey he relates how, in a foray amongst the Makololo, thirty captives were given in exchange for three English muskets. Livingstone is especially severe on the Boers for looting his mission station in 1852, killing many of the Bakwains, and driving nearly two hundred of his mission children into slavery. The Boers, by so retarding his work, and making him uncomfortable at Kolobeng, helped to decide him to move northward, a decision upon which hung the future of modern African progress. Captain Lugard reminds us that slaves are still sometimes employed to

coal our men-of-war off Zanzibar, and that our commercial returns from West Africa largely depend upon an illegal traffic in arms and spirits; the guns of the slave-raiders in the far interior being mostly of British manufacture.

Sir H. H. Johnston, in his latest report of three years' administration of British Central Africa, said that the centre of the continent was being depopulated for the benefit of the east coast region, and that about a thousand slaves were smuggled through annually for the coast plantations. For the benefit of Africa, sooner or later the Arab must go, and the sooner the better; and the severe blow inflicted by the forces of the British Central African Protectorate, early this year, upon slave-raiding chiefs near Lake Nyassa, it is hoped will be the death-blow to slave-raiding in that locality.

TO SWALLOWS.

THRICE welcome, swallows swift upon the wing,
Fleet heralds of bright days and coming mirth,
When lavish Summer from her lap shall fling
Red rain of roses on the grateful earth!

In days bygone men held your coming dear,
And deemed you children's spirits from the dead
Come back beloved and loving year by year,
Unto the homes whence first your souls had fled.

And as ye hovered round the rustic thatch,
Fond ears did listen to your twittering sweet—
Ears that had yearned—ah! many a time—to catch
The well-known patter of departed feet.

Resting upon his scythe, the toil-worn swain
Would pause awhile to mark your wheeling flight;
And Mem'ry's ear was quick to catch again
Your merry mingling shouts of mad delight.

The mother's eyes grew moist as round each spot,
Endeared by tender ties, ye circling flew:
It soothed her grief to think ye ne'er forgot
The once familiar scenes your childhood knew.

'Twas there,' she mused, 'their tiny hands did weave
The fragrant cowslip ball, the daisy chain:
'Twas there they wondering watched at silent eve
The glow-worm light his lantern in the lane.'

Each night they sought their rest, well pleased to know
Their darlings 'neath the thatch were nestling near:
Fond Love their lot did ease of half its woe,
And Sympathy aye sweetened Sorrow's tear.

Then welcome, swallows, to my homely walls!
Tidings of comfort to our sires ye told;
And still to me your coming now recalls
Like memories to those it brought of old.

For many a well-loved child my dreams have bred,
Whom young Ambition did of Hope beget;
And some are dying now—some long since dead,
With you, sweet birds, return and greet me yet.

WILL HILL.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 639.—VOL. XIII.

SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

BIRD-CATCHING IN HELIGOLAND.

By JOHN CORDEAUX, M.B.O.U.

THE island of Heligoland lies in the same latitude and two hundred and eighty-five miles east of Flamborough Head, forty miles from Cuxhaven and the mouth of the Elbe, and thirty from the coast of Sleswick-Holstein. Until its cession to Germany in 1890 it was the smallest dependency of the British crown. In case of a European war the island never could have been valuable to England, but on the other hand, its possession is an immense advantage to Germany, serving as a marine outpost to watch the entrances to the Elbe and Weser. When under the English rule, half-a-dozen coastguards did duty as garrison; now large barracks have been erected on the Oberland, and the plateau bristles with heavy guns.

The main island is one mile in length and two-thirds of a mile broad, with an area of about one hundred acres. The superficial extent may be estimated when we say it would be impossible to find room anywhere on the Oberland for a cricket pitch without the risk of an occasional far-driven ball skipping over the edge of the high cliffs of red sandstone into the sea. Some portion of the Oberland, or plateau, is covered with houses and very charming gardens, but the main town is below the cliff on the beach or Unterland. The population is about two thousand, with the addition of another two thousand visitors for the sea-bathing in the summer months. There is no cow on Heligoland, and up to the German occupation no horse had ever been seen there. So great, indeed, was the sensation amongst the primitive people when the Prussian engineers brought over some dray-horses to shift their big guns, that the school children, on the mere rumour of their landing, became unmanageable and broke away 'helter-skelter' to see the marvellous beasts. The produce of the island chiefly consists of potatoes grown on the Oberland, and some

small plots of rye and barley, and there is grazing for a few tethered goats.

The great interest of Heligoland consists in the fact that it is, from an ornithological point of view, literally without a rival in the world. For its sea-girt cliffs lie directly in the line of the great migratory stream of countless birds which in the autumn pass from their northern breeding stations to seek the lands of the deathless summer, again to commence their journey northwards with the first breath of early spring. This bird movement in its flow and ebb assumes enormous proportions, and is continued from day to day, week to week, and month after month, so that with the exception perhaps of June, between the ebb and flow, there is no other month in the year when birds are not, with favourable meteorological conditions, on the move.

It may be readily understood then that, on a beefless and muttonless island, where every necessity and luxury must be brought from the mainland, what an immense importance to the islanders becomes the capture of the migrating birds which pass that way. And certainly we can testify in no other spot in the world is more attention given, or more ingenuity displayed, in the outwitting of the feathered hosts—guns, nets, snares, gins, catapults, and all possible devices, being brought into play. Fortunately for our knowledge of Heligoland and its bird wonders, there has been resident there for more than half a century one of the most eminent and painstaking naturalists in Europe—Heinrich Gätke; and in 1891 his great work on the *Birds of Heligoland* was brought out in German at Brunswick. This was subsequently followed in 1895 by the English edition,* which may fairly be considered the most important contribution in the present century to our knowledge of the path of the bird in the air. It is

* *Heligoland as an Ornithological Observatory: The Results of Fifty Years' Experience*, by Heinrich Gätke. Translated by Rudolph Rosenstock, M.A., Oxon. (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 10 Castle Street, 1895.)

from this splendid work and our own personal knowledge of the island that the materials have been brought together for this paper.

Some idea may be formed of the marvellous number of birds occasionally captured, from the fact, which Mr Gätke permitted me to copy from his journal on my first visit there, that on the evening of November 6, 1868, at the lighthouse up to 9.30 p.m. three thousand four hundred larks were caught beating and fluttering against the glass of the lantern; of these Mr Gätke himself took four hundred and forty with his own hand. The same evening, and in the same time, eleven thousand six hundred were taken with nets, lanterns, &c., within the zone of light below the lighthouse. A grand total of fifteen thousand larks in a few hours!

Much the largest number of captures, more especially of the thrushes, are made with a contrivance known as a 'trossel-goard'—literally a 'throstle-garden.' 'Throstle-bush' is more applicable to the structure, but there is no word in the Heligoland vocabulary to represent 'bush'—every form of growth, from the forest tree to a plant in a pot is 'boamen,' that is, trees. There are about twenty of these throstle bushes on the island. These may be either natural or artificial. The first, a slip or narrow belt of thorns and other shrubs growing in a garden. Usually, however, they are artificially constructed with a mass of thorns and sticks placed upright. At the highest and most open and exposed part of the island I once examined six of these constructions, a collection of thorns, bushes, and long sticks, ten to twelve feet high and perpendicular in front, and those in the rear inclined to them at an angle enclosing a space of brushwood with a twenty-foot front and six to eight feet wide at the base, gradually thinning off to the top. The east side, from which the birds come, is left open; the far side, top and flanks, is covered with a light net which extends to within a foot of the ground, and is there fastened to small upright stakes; from these extends horizontally the ground-net, forming an extensive semicircle round the far sides and flanks of the bush, and gradually nearing the surface till it rests loosely on the soil, six feet from the base of the construction. It is essential that 'throstle-gardens' should be visible to migrants at some distance, and that there is nothing which might impede the headlong rush of the birds towards the open and unnetted side.

Mr Gätke says, the arrival of the thrushes at early dawn is marked by a peculiar buzzing sound; the birds shooting down from a great height with an almost perpendicular descent, and so extremely rapid is this downrush that it only becomes visible to the eye as the birds slacken speed near the ground. During a strong migration, thrushes at early dawn will

'buzz,' with the speed of an arrow, through the narrow streets and precipitate themselves into the shrubs and throstle bushes. The greatest speed of the birds during the day is as nothing when compared to this early morning flight, which probably represents the last spurt of the migratory journey. Once within the false shelter of the throstle-bush, and the capture of the unfortunate victims is assured. They are driven forward by the beating of a stick, and at night by the additional glare of a large lantern, and finding egress barred on the far side, flutter downwards to pass beneath the horizontal ground-net from which there is no escape. These shelter-decoys are very effective, and immense numbers of migrants—even gray crows, sparrow-hawks, woodcocks, and often owls—are captured from time to time.

The Heligolandish fowlers draw a marked distinction between the habits of the blackbird and thrush. They say of the former, 'a very sensible bird which allows itself to be driven to the throstle-bush without much fuss.' A blackbird when on the ground, on being approached, will hop towards a throstle-bush, quickly in long leaps and frequent pauses; on the other hand, a thrush will sit still and at last fly vertically upwards and over the bush. The capture of thrushes was formerly a very lucrative employment, but in recent years (Mr Gätke thinks through meteorological changes) the take has greatly fallen off. Formerly a well-known fowler used to catch five or six hundred in a day, and once he caught a thousand in a day. At the present time a hundred is considered a good take.

The ring-ousel is always a great prize amongst the local fowlers, for they are invariably fat and in high condition during the autumn migration. Should a single ring-ousel get into the throstle-bush, its call will lure the members of any flock of its species which may be on the wing. On one occasion it was the good fortune of a fowler to take seventy-three of these splendid birds in one 'rush.' Usually ten or twelve would be considered an enviable catch.

The redwing is rarely taken in a 'throstle-bush,' seldom approaching one, the flocks resorting to more open situations. The same applies to the fieldfare, which only enters the bush under very exceptional circumstances, as when belated at night.

To Heligoland gunners the woodcock is an object of the greatest interest, and during his migration all other fowl are neglected. Woodcocks cross Heligoland in great numbers in the spring and autumn—and in the latter season, when woodcock are in flight, in the early gray of morning, the constant pop-pop of guns at the foot of the cliffs resembles a line of skirmishers defending their island home. It is on record that on the 21st of October

1823 the number caught and shot exceeded eleven hundred; eighty-three falling to one gun, and a certain Hans Prohl shot ninety-nine, failing to bring down his hundredth bird. When mentioning these exploits, it must be borne in mind that the guns used in those days by the Heligoland gunners were ancient infantry, flint and steel muskets fished up, after months of submergence in salt water, from the wreck of a Dutch vessel—the bowl of a clay-pipe being measure for both powder and shot. On October 16, 1861, about six hundred woodcocks were caught or shot, and bags of from two to three hundred have frequently been known for one day's shooting. Once in the spring, on a Good-Friday, seventy-four were shot by a young pilot.

Woodcocks have occasionally been taken in 'throstle-bushes,' and many are snared in large nets specially constructed for that purpose. These nets are from thirty-six to seventy-two feet in length, and twenty-four feet high, with two and a half inch mesh, so that a cock in full flight may readily get his head and neck through. The nets are made of strong gray thread, and hung on two poles in some opening between trees or buildings; there are two running blocks and a cord which the fowler holds; the net is weighted heavily at its upper corners to make it fall readily; and when a bird strikes, the net is instantly slipped, and it rarely happens the victim escapes. On the 15th of October 1859, a considerable flight of that small and pretty northern owl, called Tengmalm's owl, visited the island, and in hopes of capturing specimens, a woodcock net was hoisted in the dusk, but these owls fly so cautiously and see so keenly that the device was useless. There are ten or twelve woodcock nets in use on the island, on each of which is a tax of five marks.

Woodcocks on migration not only settle on the bare level upper plateau, but great numbers on the shingle at the base of the cliffs, and on ledges and slight projections at all heights on the cliff face. The story is told of a gunner, who, getting the heads of two woodcocks in line on the lower rocks, discharged his piece and found to his great joy he had killed four. Golden and grayplover are shot crossing the upper plateau and also on the Dune or Sand Island, being lured within shot without difficulty by the plover whistle.

In the early autumn enormous numbers of wheatears arrive on their passage south. The first—and this holds good amongst all the migrants—are young birds of the year. This last autumn in September the plateau was covered with these lively little visitors, or the remains of such as had been killed by hungry hawks on passage at the same time. The wheatears are caught in great numbers for the tables of the visitors who come for sea-bathing. A simple draw-net is employed. A small hillock, being first erected five feet long and eight to ten inches high—parallel to this the

net is placed, and by means of a line jerked over the hillock. Sometimes a colony of ants is introduced into the mound and forms an excellent bait. During a very strong migration the produce of a net may amount to five or ten score. On perfectly dark gloomy nights, when there is a heavy migration of larks and other migrants flying low near the surface, the whole island is astir, men and boys sallying forth with lanterns and a sort of big landing-net. As soon, however, as the very faintest indication of light appears from the rising moon, or a single star pierces the gloom, the vast migration flight ceases, the birds rising and passing forward at a high altitude.

There are other simpler means of fowling than any we have mentioned. On a pitch-dark night, moonless and starless, a man armed only with a stick and a large lantern will go forth on the plateau, traversing to and fro in the hope of being able to knock some belated wayfarers on the head, and by this means replenish his soup pot. Out of the millions of gray crows which in the autumn cross Heligoland by an east to west route, few ever remain the night, but it will sometimes happen that a late flock, not caring to face the darkness, after flying two or three times round the plateau, will alight and stay the night. I have a note that on October 14, 1887, a Heligolander went to the north point of the island with lantern and cudgel, and killed seventy-five hooded crows roosting on the grass. Mr Gätke mentions a case where a resident killed one hundred and eighty-four of these rascals in the same manner.

What do the Heligolanders do with their birds? Some are sent away to the Hamburg market, and the rest kept for home consumption. Roasting before a slow fire, with the trail on, over toast, is practically an unknown art, or at least one rarely practised. Everything goes into the pot for soup. 'Trossel-soup' is an institution much lauded. Mr Gätke tells us how it should be prepared. Take care to commit some forty or fifty thrushes, according to the requirements of the family, to the soup pot, and do not have the fattest birds drawn; and if the cook is a true artist, no one will fail to ask a second helping. A favourite Heligoland dish is Kittiwake pie. In November and December these gulls are very fat, and when prepared in Heligolandish fashion are considered a delicacy, although a somewhat fishy one. The gray crow is also a very favourite dish. Nothing strikes a visitor to the island in autumn more than the astonishing number of gray crows which pass over between the end of September and the close of November by an east to west route. A mere fraction of these vast hosts remain to winter in our eastern counties, but where do the remainder go? And more wonderful: Where do they all come from? Drawn together by some mysterious instinct from the confines of Europe and beyond? On the night of October 17th, or early morning of the 18th, last autumn, there was a large arrival on the east coast of Lincolnshire; and I noticed amongst these many having the pale slate-gray almost white, or very much lighter than the ordinary

crow immigrants. This was suggestive of an arrival from beyond the Urals from Western Siberia, and perhaps even the western boundary of Persia.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

CHAPTER XI.—LOVE, THE TRAITOR.

IN that way began the companionship that has changed the whole of my life and Isabel's life as well—you shall hear how.

My lessons in the study of Nature and Humanity were continued during the months of June and July. On Saturdays we went afield—to Hampton, to Richmond, to Dulwich, to Sydenham, to Loughton, to Chigwell, to Theydon Bois, to Chingford, to St Albans—wherever there are trees and gardens to be seen. Or we went up the river to Maidenhead, Bray, Windsor, Weybridge: or down the river to Greenwich. On Sunday morning I took her generally to Westminster, where she heard the silver voices of the choir ringing in the roof, while we sat in a corner of the transept beside the tombs. At such a time I would watch her and mark how her spirit was rapt and carried away. When the music ceased, we would get up and go out and seek the peaceful cloister, cool and shady, on the south side of the church, and there sit together, mostly in silence.

Let me make a clean breast of it. Not that I am penitent, but quite the contrary. I ought, I suppose, to have discontinued these little expeditions as soon as I learned what was coming out of them. That would be the line adopted by the Sage of seventy springs. I had only five-and-twenty. Moreover, it is very difficult to say when friendship is transformed into love: the young man goes on: the companionship, always delightful, becomes too delightful to give up: the companion creeps into his heart and remains there until one day he awakes to the consciousness that life without that companion will henceforth be intolerable.

But we entered upon the thing loyally: we had no thought of any danger: then, no one interfered with us: we went where we pleased. I began with thinking about Isabel when I ought to have been considering the lines of a boat: I began to think how she looked: what she said: her face haunted me: her sweet soft face, full of purity, grace, and every womanly virtue: her eyes, her deep and limpid eyes, wells of holy thoughts, charged with goodness: her voice—the tones of her voice—which had become to me the sweetest music in the world. I dreamed of these things at night—I thought of them all day: long before I understood what had happened to me: long before Isabel suspected anything. The last thing indeed which the maiden feared or suspected was the thing that happened. She was engaged to Robert: and I was Robert's cousin: and by Robert's permission I was showing her the world. Even a girl who knows the ways of the world, and especially the treacherous, villainous, deceptive ways of young men, and would be therefore

suspicious in such a case, might have thought that there was some security in common loyalty and friendship. But Isabel had no knowledge of the world, and no experience of young men, and consequently no suspicion.

The end—I mean the end of unsuspecting confidence—arrived unexpectedly. It came one evening, about the middle of July and at sunset. We were sitting in the place where I had taken Isabel first, the park near Rickmansworth. She sang hymns no more: nor did she faint at beholding the splendour and the glory of the world; but she sat in silence, gazing upon the western glow in the sky and on the flowing river at her feet where the glow was reflected.

Could this glorious creature be the pale and drooping maiden whom I brought here six weeks before? Now she sat upright, cheeks glowing, eyes uplifted, limpid and lovely eyes, with rounded figure and head erect, a girl full of life and of the joy of youth.

'The summer is nearly gone,' she said. 'So there is no need for any more evenings abroad. Now I suppose I must make up my mind to go back to Wapping, and to stay there. Well, I have a very happy time to remember.'

'Indeed, you shall not, Isabel, if I can help it. Go back to the old life? Not if I have any voice in the matter. Besides, the clouds are not all gone. There is one that falls on you quite suddenly, and sometimes lies upon you for an hour or more. Why, it has fallen now. You cloud over suddenly, Isabel. It is some thought that comes to you uninvited. Your face must be all sunshine or all cloud. Never was such a tell-tale face.'

She blushed, but the cloud lay there still.

'What is it, Isabel? What is this cloud? Is it anything that I can remove?'

'No one can remove it,' she said.

'Is it anything—but I have no right to ask. Only, Isabel, if you like to tell me, I might advise.'

She remained silent, but the tears gathered in her eyes.

'Tell me, Isabel,' I pressed her. 'I asked you once before in the old burial-ground.'

'I do not dare. I am ashamed. You will think me the most ungrateful of women if I tell you.'

'Then tell me and let me scold you.'

'It is because of that promise.'

Then the scales fell from my eyes, and I understood the cloud. It was the terror of that promise. 'And you, Isabel, you do not want to marry him?'

'Oh, he has been so good. I have told you—we owe everything to him—I am bound to him by chains—and yet—yet, oh George. I am telling you everything. I am ashamed—yet I must tell some one, because sometimes I think I shall go mad; it weighs me down night and day.'

'Then you must yourself break off your engagement.'

'No, no. I cannot. You forget, George, that we are his dependents, my father and I, both of us. I must do what Robert wishes—all that Robert wishes.'

I groaned.

'And now you know the meaning of the

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cloud. I am only happy when I can forget my own future. And all your kindness is thrown away, because the thought of my own future never leaves me altogether—even with you.'

And then it was that I quite lost my self-control.

'Oh Isabel!' I cried. 'You shall not marry him. Oh! my love—my love—you shall not marry him.'

I took her hands. She cried out and sprang to her feet. I threw my arms round her and kissed her, being carried quite beyond my own control. And I told her in words that I cannot, dare not, set down here for the world to see all that was lying in my heart.

She pushed me from her, and sank back upon the fallen tree on which she had been sitting, and buried her face in her hands.

'Isabel!' I whispered, 'Isabel! if you can love me!'

She gave me her hand. 'Let me hear it once—and say it once, for the first time and the last. Oh George—and I did not know it.'

I kissed her again and again. It makes my heart leap up still only to think of that moment.

Then she stood up. 'It is the first time and the last, George,' she said. 'I am engaged to your cousin Robert.'

'Yes, Isabel.'

'Now we will go home. We will not forget this evening, George. I thank God—yes, I thank God we have told each other. Now I shall feel, whatever happens, that I have been loved—even I, whose promised husband scorns me.' Her voice broke into a sob. 'But we must never, never again speak of it. Never, never. You have loved me for a little, and that is enough for me—to gladden all my life. Even I have been loved—even I'—

I made no reply, because I was fully resolved, you see, somehow to speak of it again. In fact, I felt that it was impossible to consider any other future than one in which the subject would always form the chief topic of conversation.

'Give me your promise, George,' she went on. 'Promise that you will never speak to me of love again.'

'I promise, Isabel, that I will never again speak to you of love until Robert himself has set you free. Will that do?'

(To be continued.)

WANDERING NEEDLES.

It used formerly to be supposed that when a foreign body—no matter what—became lodged in a person's tissues Nature resented its presence, and proceeded at once to do her utmost to cast it off. The means by which she attempted to carry out this purpose was by the formation of an abscess, so it was believed. But the light of modern science has shown that the assumption in this respect was scarcely correct. We now know that Nature is quite complacent in the matter, provided that the foreign body is free from micro-organisms, or to use a technical expression, is 'sterile.' A rusty nail, for example, thrust deep into the sole of the

foot would be quite harmless in its effects were it to contain no micro-organisms on its surface. Again, many bullets have found a resting-place in the bones and tissues of soldiers, where for years and years they have remained without causing harm, merely because they were sterile when they entered the body. Moreover, numerous curious instances could be given of the location of foreign substances in the tissues which, for the same reason, have never caused the least disturbance. Perhaps, however, nothing is more striking in this connection than the wondrous records which exist in regard to needles. In surgery, needles have quite an established reputation for performing marvellous feats in the human body.

Needles display great propensity for travelling when they enter the body. If, for example, an ordinary sewing-needle, or a portion of it, happens to be thrust into, say, the hand, and for some reason no effort is made at the time to extract it, there is no saying when or where the little piece of steel will next be seen. In the majority of cases it starts on a voyage of discovery, which may ultimately prove to be a long course of travelling. In its quiet unobtrusive way it passes along in the substance of the soft tissues without exciting any ill effect. Then after a longer or shorter interval as the case may be, just like a traveller weary of strange scenes and longing to return once more to his native haunts, the needle at length makes its way to the surface of the skin, and when everything concerning it has almost been forgotten, it reappears to the amazement of its host. As it approaches the skin it causes a pricking sensation which leads to its detection. The attendance of the surgeon is required in order to extract it, and as with the traveller who returns with a bronzed complexion after a long journey in a tropical climate, so with the needle. It entered the tissues with its surface polished, bright and reflecting. On the other hand, after its extraction it is seen to have lost all its lustre, is stained, blackened, and more or less rough. But needles do not always travel in the body. Sometimes they appear to be quite satisfied to remain in one spot, namely that at which they originally entered the tissues. In this connection, perhaps, I may refer to the following instance. A young girl of seventeen years of age was admitted into a country infirmary. She came with the history that four years previously she had run a needle into her right knee while kneeling on a hearth-rug. She persisted in this statement, but careful examination altogether failed to detect the slightest indication of the presence of a foreign body. She was, however, so positive in her assertion that pressure on a particular spot over her knee caused her pain and that she could feel the point of the needle, that ultimately the house surgeon was convinced, and he was successful in persuading the visiting surgeon to make an attempt at the removal of the foreign body. Accordingly, under an anæsthetic an incision was made over the tissues of the knee, with the result that nothing could be felt or seen. The incision was made deeper, still without result. At this precise moment another member of the

visiting staff appeared, took in the situation at a glance, hurriedly remarked, 'Take care you don't go into the knee-joint,' and presumably in fear lest he should be present at such a misfortune, precipitately retired from the scene. After, however, the surgeon had been reassured, he divided the tissues still further, and then, at last, lying almost upon the capsule of the joint, in a transverse position, the needle was found, and, with some little difficulty, extracted. The wound healed without a bad symptom, and in the course of a few days the girl left the infirmary quite well. As she was a domestic servant, and had not previously been able to follow her employment in consequence of the needle hurting her when she knelt, it was obvious that the result of the operation from her point of view was eminently satisfactory. The above case is a good example of the difficulties which may arise in connection with the detection of needles which have become located in the tissues.

In one of the medical journals a surgeon recorded some years ago a strange instance of the wanderings of a needle in a lady. The patient called upon him, stating that the greater portion of an ordinary sewing-needle had broken in the first joint of her left thumb. The surgeon could plainly feel the needle point, but after ineffectual attempts at the extraction of the foreign body, he recommended that nothing further should be done, lest the attempts to remove it might result in greater injury to the joint. About a year afterwards, however, the patient called upon him to inform him that a day or two previously she had felt a pricking sensation in the right forefinger, and having broken the skin, she without difficulty extracted the portion of the lost needle from the point of the finger. If all these facts be correct, as reported, the needle travelled from the left thumb along the arm, across the chest to the right arm, and down the latter to the finger where it was extracted.

The following is a well-authenticated case of a similar kind. A man was stabbed in the back of the right shoulder with a hat-pin, such as women use. The pin broke when the blow was inflicted, and only the head with the upper part could subsequently be found. The man suffered no inconvenience from the injury, and this being the case, he thought no more of the matter. However, some months afterwards he suffered a good deal from pain in his right shoulder, and this was ascribed to rheumatism. But no relief followed the treatment adopted, and it was not until some weeks had elapsed that the symptoms entirely passed away. In the course of time he noticed a long hard substance under the skin in the region of the lower part of the breast-bone which puzzled him greatly. Suddenly he chanced to think of the stab with the pin, which he had received about twelve months previously, and then it occurred to him that the hard substance was the missing portion of the pin. He obtained the services of a surgeon, who cut down upon the foreign body and found it to be exactly as the man had supposed. The portion of the pin extracted was two inches and five-eighths in length, and slightly bent in the middle.

Nothing is easier than to explain how it is that needles can travel about in the body and remain there for long periods without the tissues resenting their presence. The explanation is that at the time of their entrance into the body the foreign bodies were free from micro-organisms, that is, sterile. The smooth polished surface of a needle, and the cleanly uses to which the little appliance is put, undoubtedly favour its freedom from microbic contamination. Why the needle should travel by the route it sometimes chooses is less easily explained. The fact that substances introduced in a sterile condition into the body are tolerated by the tissues is one of which surgeons have freely taken advantage. Indeed, a good deal of the success of surgical procedures in the present day depends upon it. One of the most notable instances in which it proves of use is in that relating to the employment of ligatures. Arteries are now tied with sterilised silk, and the ends of the ligature cut off short; of course, silk is a foreign substance which cannot undergo absorption, but no fear need be felt that the ligatures left in a wound will cause any subsequent trouble. Nature surrounds them with newly formed tissue; in other words, they become 'encysted,' and there the matter ends. Again, silver wire is used to unite fragments of bone, as, for example, in cases of fracture of the patella. The wire sutures are allowed to remain *in situ*, and no anxiety need be felt respecting them; they cannot provoke any inflammatory disturbance.

Röntgen's new method of photography—or rather shadow-fixing by means of cathodic rays—promises to be of much use in the detection of wandering needles. In Munich hospital a man was successfully freed, by operation, of a needle which had penetrated one of his hands between the fourth and fifth metacarpal bones, and had previously defied detection. The hand was photographed and the position of the needle was detected. At Queen's Hospital, Birmingham, a woman's swollen hand was photographed, and by the aid of the print a needle was easily discovered, and successfully extracted. Dr McKenzie Davidson, Aberdeen, successfully extracted a needle from the foot of a patient, after its position had also been defined by the new photography.

BILLY BINKS—HERO.

CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

As soon as he was gone, our little garrison was called to arms, and sentries were posted at every point of vantage. Then came a period of waiting, which was far more difficult to bear than any fighting would have been. About half-past four the enemies' commander came forward to the fence, and demanded that I should at once give up to him the free labourers in my employ. This I refused to do, at the same time allowing him to understand that the first man who set foot inside my fence would be shot without further warning. This firmness on my part had a wholesome effect

upon his followers, and they kept religiously outside, not, however, without threats of what they would do as soon as the main body should arrive. As six o'clock struck, my wife came running to me to say that the store and out-buildings were in flames, and when I heard that, I expected that the kitchen and stable near the house would follow suit. But either from fear of coming within range of our rifles, or because they hoped to be able to utilise them later on, these buildings remained un-hurt.

Shortly before seven o'clock one of the hands hastened through the house to where I had stationed myself near my office door, to report that a big cloud of dust was rising on the plain to the eastward, and that he suspected it betokened the approach of the main body. Unfortunately it proved to be exactly what he predicted, and an hour later, the house was surrounded by nearly a hundred men, under the command of one of the most notorious of the Queensland strike leaders.

In language so vile that I cannot reproduce it here, this scoundrel called upon me to bring out and hand over to him the men I was sheltering, assuring me at the same time, with still more blasphemous oaths, that if I did not instantly comply with his request he would set fire to my house and allow every person inside it to perish in the flames. Then came a remark which brought out a cold sweat of fear upon my face.

'You'd best make up your mind pretty soon,' he cried mockingly, 'for there's no police coming to save you. You sent off a boy with a message a while back, but he won't deliver it. If you want him, you'd best go down to the Twenty Mile Creek, where you'll find 'im 'anging by 'is 'eels to a limb of a coolabah just above the crossing. Jim Burns, here, is ridin' his 'orse as you can see for yourself.'

As he spoke, a man rode forward on the very identical horse I had put poor little Billy on to, not more than four hours before. When I saw this, my heart sank like lead within me. If his tale were true, we were indeed at their mercy. But even then I could not give up the men to them, and yet, for the sake of the women in my house, I dared not exasperate them further. To gain time I endeavoured to argue with them. And in the end asked for an hour to consider their leader's proposals.

After a brief consultation with his subordinates, the delegate again rode forward, and said in a loud voice: 'You can have an hour to make up your minds. If you don't 'and 'em over to us then, we'll fire the place without further warning.'

To this speech we made no answer except to prepare ourselves the more earnestly for resistance when the time of grace should have expired. At the end of the hour there was a sudden show of activity; the leader came forward and prepared to address us. But we shall never know what he was going to say, for, just as he was about to speak, a voice in the crowd cried 'Police,' and next moment the entire gang were off across the plain as fast as their

horses' legs could take them. Ten minutes later the troopers were dismounting in front of the veranda, and we were saved.

It was from the Inspector that I learnt the history of Billy's eventful ride.

It would appear that, after jumping the fence opposite the house, he set off due east across the plains at the top of his horse's speed, untouched by the rifle-bullet that the enemy sent after him. As straight as an arrow Billy steered his gallant horse for the bend in the Twenty Mile Creek, where he knew the best ford existed. By taking advantage of this crossing he would avoid a large patch of broken ground, and at the same time save nearly five miles. The creek once behind him, he would be half-way on his journey.

The horse was in splendid fettle, and, with such an atom as Billy upon his back, made nothing of the gallop. Landmark after landmark came into view, ranged up alongside and disappeared into the dark behind him. At the end of the second hour he was within sight of the big timber of the creek. Presently he reached the bank, checked his horse, and began cautiously to descend to the ford. An unpleasant surprise, however, was in store for him. Half-way down the path a black figure rose from behind a bush and seized his reins, while another clutched him from the other side.

'Hullo, young 'un, what's the meaning of this?' asked the man who held his bridle.

'Let me go,' said Billy, with a terrible sinking in his heart. 'I ain't doin' you no harm.'

'No, I'll go bail you ain't,' the man replied with a chuckle. 'But whoever you are, you'll have to come along to the camp and give an account of yourself.'

Thereupon Billy was conducted along the creek to a bit of open ground on the bank, where a camp-fire was burning brightly. A large party of men lay about on blankets spread beneath the trees, while their horses were hobbled within easy reach. Billy's captors gave a shout, and instantly every man was wide awake and eager to be informed where they had found him. As soon as this had been explained, the leader of the party walked over and lifted Billy from his horse.

'Now, young 'un,' said he, 'it will be best for you to tell us what you're up to. Speak the truth, or I'll skin you alive.'

'I ain't afraid of tellin' you,' said the unfortunate Billy, beginning to blubber. 'But I don't see what call you have for to stop me like this. I ain't done you no 'arm.'

'None of your jaw now,' said the man, giving him a vicious shake as he spoke. 'Just tell us what you're doing gallopin' about the country on the boss's thoroughbred like this?'

Astute Billy saw his opportunity, and began to sob with renewed energy.

'If I tell you, you'll go and split,' he moaned, 'an' then I'll be sent to *chokee*; I know I shall.'

'Well, what have you been up to?'

'I've been and bolted from the station, 'cause I didn't want to be killed,' he wailed, 'an' I couldn't get no other 'orse 'cause they've turned 'em all out. If the boss catches me, he'll murder me; I know he will.'

'You young dog,' said the man, 'you're lying, but I'll soon make you tell. Here boys, build up that fire and give me Dave Garman's green hide.'

The fire was built up with a few twigs, and the long rope was quickly forthcoming.

'Now,' said Billy's tormentor, running the latter through the ring, and slipping the noose over the little fellow's body to tighten it round his ankles. 'You'd best out with it, an' no darned shilly-shallying. Tell me what message the boss sent you with, or I'll hang you head downwards over that fire!'

'I ain't got no message to tell you,' sobbed Billy; 'it's the truth, so help me never.'

The words were hardly out of his mouth before the rope was over a projecting limb, and Billy was swinging by his heels above the fire. But still the little fellow's pluck held out. He no longer cried, however; his anger was thoroughly roused, and in spite of being half suffocated by the smoke, he hurled defiance at his tormentors with all the eloquence of his vituperative little tongue, calling them cowardly dogs, and offering to fight any two of them with one hand tied behind his back, if they'd only let him down. Never for a moment did he dream of purchasing his freedom by betraying the trust which had been reposed in him. And yet the pain must have been excruciating. The men stood round in a group and watched him, though the more soft-hearted cried 'Shame,' and one or two slunk away rather than watch what they considered deliberate murder, but, for the sake of their own cowardly skins, would not attempt to prevent.

Suddenly there was a cry of 'Fire,' and at the same instant flames darted across the grass towards the spot where the various blankets lay. In the face of this new danger Billy was instantly forgotten; every man rushed off to save his goods and chattels before the fire could reach them, and the lad was left alone. Then Billy, who by this time was almost unconscious, heard a voice whisper in his ear: 'Look out, old man, I've fired the grass to save you. I'm going to cut you down.'

An instant later the rope was severed, and a pair of strong arms had caught him, and were bearing him away towards some bushes where a horse stood saddled.

'Get up,' said his unknown friend, placing him in the saddle, 'and be off with you as hard as you can go. You've got our best horse, so don't spare him.'

Without even stopping to say 'Thank you,' Billy seized the reins, pressed home his spurs and started for the opposite bank. Before he could reach it, however, his escape was observed and three men started in pursuit. Seeing that they could not hope to catch him, one of them, noted for his cruelty and his extraordinary marksmanship, picked up a rifle, brought it to his shoulder and fired. There was a shrill little scream, and next moment horse and rider reached the summit and disappeared over the bank.

Once out of sight Billy set his horse going in downright earnest. He knew he had been hit, for he felt a stabbing pain somewhere below his left shoulder, and he could feel the

blood flowing from the wound. But he had no time to think of how it might affect him; he was only conscious that he had lost nearly half an hour, and that he must make up for it at any cost. The horse was a willing beast, and Billy taxed his powers to the uttermost. But with every mile he put behind him he lost more of his strength. His head was swimming terribly, and his left side ached as if it were stabbed in a hundred places. The bushes and coarse Mitchell grass danced and flickered before his eyes, but on he galloped, clinging to the pommel of his saddle, and to his horse's mane when he became too weak to sit upright.

All the time, he told me afterwards, the baby's face was before his eyes, and a voice was ringing in his ears telling him, though he described it to me in other words, that he, Billy Binks, the little ne'er-do-weel and station outcast, had been trusted like a man, and for that reason, even if he died for it, he must carry out what he had set himself to do.

At last, in the gray dawn, after he seemed to have been galloping for years, the roofs of the township appeared in sight on the plain ahead; he roused his horse with a feeble shout, and in less than a quarter of an hour was among the police tents on the outskirts of the town.

The account of his arrival is best told in the Inspector's own words.

'It was about half an hour before daylight when I heard the noise of a horse galloping furiously across the plain towards the tents. Wondering what it might mean, and half expecting a call out, I sprang from my blankets and ran to the tent-door. As I lifted the flap I heard the sentry challenge, and next moment a completely exhausted horse pulled up within half-a-dozen paces of where I stood. On its back was what looked, in that light, more like a monkey than the boy it turned out to be. He was hatless and coatless, and was clinging to the mane of his beast, as if he were afraid if he let go he might fall off. Altogether he presented a most curious figure as I went over to him.

"What's the matter, my lad," I asked, taking him by the arm and looking closely at him.

"Unionists at Kalamán," he faltered. "Boss wants you—wants you to come at once, baby—the baby!"

'But he could not manage any more. The pluck that had sustained him so long now deserted him, and, losing his balance, he toppled over and fell unconscious into my arms. Then it was that I discovered he was soaked in blood. Without losing a minute I sent him across to the hospital, after which I called up my men, and in less than a quarter of an hour we were on our way to Kalamán. The rest you know.'

Little as we expected it, this incident proved the end of our trouble, for three days later the Labour leaders declared the strike at an end, and Queensland was free once more. The very instant it was possible, my wife and I, taking the baby with us, drove into Karabee to see the little lad who had gone through so much to save us.

We found him, as we had been led to expect we should, in the hospital, a dismal, galvanised iron building on the outskirts of the town. His appearance frightened me more than I liked to own, but his delight at seeing us was immense, and, when the baby was brought in and seated beside him on the counterpane, the nurse implored me to cut the interview short, as she feared the excitement would be too much for him.

Before we left I drew the doctor aside and asked him what he thought of the case. He gravely shook his head, and that shake made my heart ache worse than it had ever done before.

'We're going to operate to-morrow,' he said, 'but I'm almost afraid it will be useless.'

His words proved only too prophetic, for two days later, a little before sundown, the life of Billy Binks—a hero if ever there was one—was required of him. Without a murmur, conscious to the last, his hand in mine, the little soul went aloft to receive the reward which it has been promised shall be the portion of those who, at any cost, fulfil the trust reposed in them.

OUR HIGHLAND AND ISLAND BREEDS.

In old-established homes we constantly discover traces of a connection with a foreign land, strange shells from the South Seas, boxes of perfumed sandalwood from the gorgeous East, or maybe a moccasin from the Great Lone Land. If we penetrated to the attics of such houses, we would find there, stowed away, furniture of a past date, driven out of the rooms below by newer importations.

Our Highland and Island animals are like these traces of far lands or of ancient lumber. They tell us of other days and races, and of foreign traffic. The dun and gray, long-horned Highland cattle have been driven with their owners out of the fat Lowlands, driven to the attics, as it were. The Duke of Hamilton preserves a few of the ancient Britons at Cadzow; sturdy, determined beasts they are, with somewhat of the build of the Polled Angus about them. These latter, despite their black coats, are reported to be descended from the original cattle of Caledonia, which were said to be white.

Thackeray tells us how when Charles Stuart's niece, Sophia, married Ernest Augustus of Brunswick, she 'brought the reversion to the Crown of the Three Kingdoms in her scanty trousseau.' The English princess, Margaret Tudor, when she crossed the Tweed to be united to James IV., brought along with her ample revenue the future succession to England's Crown. In her day, cattle were used instead of gold, and as part of her dower, her father, Henry VII., presented her with a herd of kine, which were long known as the Falkland breed. The park of Falkland Palace, on the shoulder of the Fife Lomonds, was the royal residence assigned to this four-legged portion of her 'providing,' a palace which to-day bears her monogram cut on its ancient walls. Cattle seemed

to be current coin in those days, for Margaret's great grandson, James I. of England, repaid a loan from his subjects, in the kingdom of Fife, with black cattle. When the hornless race of 'doddies,' now known as Polled Angus, were nearly extinct, the descendants of the Fife or Falkland breeds, Queen Margaret's dower, and King Jamie's repaid borrowings, were sought after and crossed with the remnant of polleys. Samuel Johnson mentions in his famous Scotch tour, 'the black cattle are without horns called by the Scots hummle cows.' They have cousins on the hills of Galloway, but the Aberdeenshires, owing, maybe, to the smoother coats of the Anglified Falkland cows, are a sleeker race than those black skins that live so hardily on the heughs of the Stewartry.

The Shetland sheep and Shetland ponies tell of Norse and Spanish blood. The Fair Isle hosiery, which the natives knit so cunningly and dye such curious colours, are remains of the storm-dispersed Spaniards. The *murid*, or brown sheep, from which the soft wool is obtained, were welcome invaders, whether they came with Spaniards, or, as some say, with Norsemen. At the Edinburgh Exhibition, in 1886, alongside the peculiarly bright caps and jerseys from the Fair Isle, hung a pouch bought by a lady in Valencia market. The colours, and texture of the wools, of the fickle South and the dark North, were identical, verifying the tradition of the Islanders, that the secret of the special dyes was taught them three centuries ago by some survivors of the Armada. The Fetlar Island breed of ponies are said to have a strong strain of Arab blood in them, inherited from the horses cast ashore from the wrecks of our would-be conquerors in 1588. The big-headed, sure-footed steeds of Norway were the original progenitors of the diminutive ponies of the Shetlands. In Iceland, where they were unmixed with Southern blood, they remain to this day clumsy about the head, and wanting in that slim-limbed daintiness which makes the Shetlanders so much sought after. In Wales, the ponies are said to have inherited their dapperness from our earlier conquerors, the Romans, who left their horses behind them. In the Isle of Man, there used to be a breed of Manx ponies (not like the hens and cats peculiar to that unique place—namely, tailless) with a brown stripe down their creamy chestnut backs and a cross of brown on their shoulders. In the west of Ireland, which was also much frequented by the hardy Norsemen, the horses are often so coloured and marked.

The stout assistants to the Stewartry smugglers, the 'Nags of Galloway,' repudiate any Spanish strain. 'They were praised by Froisart two centuries before the building of the Armada,' says a this-century descendant of the hereditary Sheriffs of Galloway. Likely enough the old Manx ponies had a strain of Galloway blood in them, as well as Norse, for the Manx-men and the Stewartry folk had much communing and intercourse, and the 'Nags of Galloway' may, like the Welsh, have had Roman ancestors.

What strange fate or what foreign vessel introduced tailless cats and hens into Manx-land, I know not. Though the cats nowadays may be

manufactured into Manx to suit the inordinate supply of tourists, they used certainly long ago to be, like poets, born, not made. The fowls, now nigh extinct, were a handsome Spanish breed, looking like huge black partridges or guinea-fowls. The Channel Islands boast of very lucrative cattle peculiar to their shores. The small deer-headed dun Jerseys are not allowed to land among their bigger spotted sisters in Guernsey, who have an Ayrshire look about them.

The long-haired Skye terrier, which figured so much in Leech's pictures in *Punch* in the sixties, like to an animated shaggy door-mat, is said to have owed his long hair, as many beasts on the rock-bound shores on the west do, to an infusion of foreign blood from the Spanish castaways. Some poodles from out of the South, dogs of war following their masters, changed the breed of Skyes from a wiry-coated race into a long-haired one. The indigenous black terrier remained untainted by foreign extraction at Dunvegan. This short-legged, hard-haired breed has recently jumped into popularity, and reappeared on the show benches, as an Aberdonian. Spaniels were in fashion in Charles II.'s reign, and bear his name to-day. Blenheims were Marlborough favourites, but pugs came over from Holland with William and Mary, and ousted the silken darlings from court favour. Dogs, like dynasties, had their day.

Australasia can boast of its moas, emus, and other 'living fossils' among its indigenous livestock; but the Mother-land has, stowed away in odd corners of her small domain, unique animals left by invaders, introduced by refugees, or brought from afar by her restless exploring sons, by means of which we can trace curious small waifs and strays of the history of this United Kingdom.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE Corporation of Swansea are about to adopt a triple electric scheme, which, when carried out, will probably be regarded as a pattern for all other local authorities to copy. This scheme aims at destruction of town refuse, the production of electric light, and tram-car propulsion by one operation. Its very audacity is enough to startle those who have become used to old jog-trot methods of municipal administration; yet there is nothing utopian about the enterprise, bold as it is in conception, and it has the favourable opinion of no less an authority than Mr Preece. According to this well-known electrician, Swansea is in a fair way of becoming a pioneer town, and, to quote his words, 'Its finances would be improved by the profits that would arise from the successful administration of those purely local and municipal industries which the legislation has decreed should be in the hands or under the control of the rate-payers themselves.'

Among the arts to which more attention was

given in past times than in the present, is that of bookbinding, the finest examples of which are the product of this country, Holland ranking next in the variety of its book coverings. The subject was dealt with in a lecture recently given in London by Mr C. Davenport of the British Museum, who, in enumerating the principal substances used in English book-binding, said that although leather was the chief material employed, many examples could be found of the use of silk, velvet, and other materials. In the middle ages, books were either very rich or very poor in their bindings, and during the Tudor period some very beautiful binding in velvet was executed, which might be compared in excellence with the wonderful goldsmith's work which preceded it. Laws had been passed to protect native binding from foreign competition, but in reality England had, as in other trades, gained by the invasion of foreigners, who brought with them fresh ideas, and were often men of taste and talent. The lecture was illustrated by a large number of coloured lantern slides, exhibiting the various styles of bookbinding peculiar to different countries and periods.

The Argentine Republic is now competing with Denmark, Sweden, France, and other countries as a producer of butter for the British market, and it would appear that the country is admirably adapted for such an industry. With abundant pasture land, and Gauchos to act as herdsmen to the cattle, the supply of milk is regular and abundant, although it is not so rich in butter fat as the product of Denmark, for example. The milk is conveyed to the butter factories, of which already there are no fewer than thirty fitted with the latest machinery, which we may mention is made in Britain and admitted free of duty by the Argentine Government. In these factories all the work is done by Europeans, mostly Italians and Basques from the south of France, who take readily to the dairy business, and are content with a wage of one shilling per day.

Another still more important new source of food-supply is represented by Canadian salmon, a first consignment of which has recently reached the London market. Tinned salmon we have had from Canada for many years, but the recent importation is of whole salmon brought over in refrigerator chambers like colonial mutton. It is well known that the Canadian rivers are well stocked with fish; so plentiful indeed are they that a halfpenny a pound for salmon is a common price in many of the towns. It remains to be seen whether the fish can be sent the enormous distance of eighteen thousand miles in a frozen condition without deterioration, and can be sold at such a price as to tempt purchasers who are ordinarily forced to regard salmon as a delicacy beyond their means. It is believed that when the new industry is thoroughly established, Canadian salmon in first-class condition will be sold in the principal English markets, and eagerly bought at about sixpence per pound.

This is not quite so cheap as the tinned fish, but there is a certain amount of prejudice against the latter, justified to some extent by reported cases of serious illness traceable to that method of preparation, which would always give a casting-vote in favour of the frozen variety. It must be remembered too, risk of illness apart, that tinned goods are more or less spoilt by the over-heating to which they are subjected.

Our national picture-galleries and museums have recently been exceedingly fortunate in the acquisition of valuable private collections, one of the most noticeable of these gifts being the important collection of birds left to the natural history branch of the British Museum by the late Mr Henry Seebohm. This gentleman had been during his life a generous donor to the same institution, constantly enriching its stores by some specimen in which it was deficient; but the bequest to the nation authorised by his will is of a far more important character, embracing as it does many historical collections which the energy and ample means of the testator had acquired. Among these may be noted Swinhoe's Chinese birds, Pryer's Japanese birds, and Anderson's Indian birds; but Mr Seebohm himself had been an industrious worker, and has been able to bequeath to the museum an example of nearly every known species of game bird, the finest collection of thrushes ever brought together, and nearly fifteen hundred skins of wading birds. This last series of specimens were those which furnished him with data for his great work on the geographical distribution of this group of birds.

The National Society for checking the abuse of public advertising has been organising a conference which was recently held at the Society of Arts, London. We have before in these columns alluded to the aims of this useful society, the principal one of which is to stop the defacement of rural scenery by the exhibition of gaudy posters, and the advertisement of proprietary medicines, &c. along our hedgerows. Such a movement must have the sympathy of every one who has an eye for the beauties of Nature, and the willing support which numerous artists, including the late lamented president of the Royal Academy, have given to the movement, gives some promise of ultimate success in stopping the evils complained of. We trust that the rural advertisement bill, when next presented to Parliament, may meet with the cordial support which it deserves.

For a long time it has been asserted that the British farming industry is unduly handicapped by the railway companies giving better terms to the foreign producer. The statement has in reality no foundation in fact, the truth being that the foreign farmers combine together and send large consignments by rail, while the native farmer is content to send small quantities, which are naturally subject to higher charges. For it stands to reason that a railway can run a ten-ton truck at a cheaper rate proportionately if it be full, than if it carry only a few hundredweight. But the Great Western Railway Company are now meeting English farmers in the most generous spirit, not only offer-

ing them favourable terms if they send their goods in sufficient quantities, but actually undertaking the collecting, transport, and consignment of the produce. To put it briefly, they will call at the farm for the goods, and when disposed of, will give the farmer a cheque for the amount due, less their own charges. Strange to say, the English farmer does not seem to appreciate this new policy on the part of the railway company, inquiries showing that he does not care to move from the customary groove, and is too jealous to co-operate with his neighbours. But he certainly can no longer complain with any reason of foreign competition. We may mention that the new departure is mainly due to the foresight of Viscount Emlyn, chairman of the Great Western Railway, who is a prominent member of the Royal Agricultural Society of England.

It has long been the complaint of artists who draw for our illustrated periodicals that much of the beauty of their work is lost in its translation to a form suitable for the printing-press. And although this is not such a crying evil as in pre-photographic days, when it was in the power of an engraver to hack a fine drawing into a very poor woodcut, the artists have still a good case. Professor Herkomer has recently introduced a method by which the artist himself has the ultimate fate of his work more under his own control. On a polished and silvered copper plate the artist makes his picture with a special kind of black pigment, using brush, dabber, stump, finger, or any tool which will produce the effect desired. The lightest shades naturally carry the least pigment, while in the deep shadows the paint is thick. The drawing is now powdered over with some body, like graphite, which forms a conducting surface, the finer particles attaching themselves to the lighter tones, and the coarser ones to where the pigment on the plate is at its thickest. This done, the plate is put in an electrotyping bath, and in course of time an intaglio plate is formed which can be printed from in the copper-plate press. The process, which it will be seen is not adapted for the typographic press, bears a strong resemblance to one introduced more than forty years ago.

We are extremely glad to record that the Dundee whaler *Active* last season had a most prosperous time, and that her owners made the largest profit realised in Dundee for the past two or three decades. The Greenland whale-fishery was the scene of action, and besides nine whales, a number of narwhals, seals, &c. were killed, the whales being estimated to produce four and a half tons of bone. After paying the cost of the outfit of the vessel, and meeting all the expenses of the trip, the lucky shareholders will receive a dividend of three hundred and sixty per cent.—which we should think is about as far beyond 'the dreams of avarice' as shareholders in any enterprise have yet gone. Some of the whalebone, we may mention, has been sold at the rate of two thousand pounds per ton.

A very valuable warning to householders was conveyed in a recent lecture by Dr W. H. Corfield, the medical officer of health, St George's, Hanover Square, London. The subject of his discourse was 'Defective Drains and

Sewer Air as Causes of Disease,' and cases were described which had come under the personal notice of the lecturer, in which disease had been directly attributable to the escape of sewer air into the dwelling-house. The most common symptom of mischief was sore throat, and if this did not appear, the members of a household breathing contaminated air suffered from 'general malaise.' It was mentioned incidentally that workmen employed in mending defective drains very commonly suffered from sore throat, and that an escape of coal-gas sometimes led to the same result. Diphtheria had been attributed to the presence of sewer air, and although this had not been proved, it was the fact that contaminated air was commonly found in houses where the disease appeared: it was fair to assume that sore throats caused by defective drains would make persons peculiarly liable to contract that complaint. Blood-poisoning and pneumonia were also occasionally produced by breathing bad air, and in infancy diarrhoea could often be traced to the same exciting cause. Typhoid fever, although mostly propagated by bad water, was also frequently spread by foul air, and instances were adduced in support of the statements.

Another paper recently read before the Liverpool Polytechnic Society, by Mr James Hargreaves, F.C.S., on sewage and zymotic poisons, contained some practical suggestions which are well worthy the attention of all sanitary authorities. Mr Hargreaves also assumes that zymotic disease is principally caused by sewer gas, which in many cases cannot be detected by its odour. He proposes to give it an unmistakable scent, and at the same time to kill all obnoxious organisms in the sewers, by pumping therein chlorine gas. This gas can be readily made by the decomposition of common salt, with the help of an electric-lighting plant, which can be run at light expense, being unoccupied in the daytime. Soda crystals would be formed as a by-product, and in large installations its sale would cover all cost of making the chlorine. Engineers may very possibly find objections to the process which are not apparent on the surface: we merely give a brief outline of the method for their consideration.

The often-discussed scheme for supplying London with a sea-water service is once more revived, and a bill to forward the enterprise will come before Parliament during the ensuing session. The idea is to obtain the water from Lancing, near Worthing, in Sussex, and to convey it by conduits to the metropolis, the cost being estimated at £450,000, and the time of construction two years. In a paper upon the subject read recently before the Society of Arts by Mr F. Grierson, many advantages were claimed for the enterprise. First comes the question of health and the great good accruing to invalids and others by sea-bathing. Then we are told that for street cleansing and watering, sea-water possesses many advantages over fresh, and that great economy would ensue from its use, forty million gallons of filtered fresh water being daily used in London for that and other non-domestic purposes. If it be true that twenty-five per cent. of the fresh water at present used by Londoners would be

saved if sea-water were at hand, it would seem that we have here a potent argument in favour of the scheme. It may be mentioned here that powers were actually obtained from Parliament a few years ago to promote a similar scheme, but the matter was allowed to lapse, either from want of support, or because the promoters found out too late that their plans were drawn on too narrow a basis.

The author of the articles on Apple, Gooseberry, and Strawberry culture, which aroused much attention and interest on their appearance in this *Journal*, has just issued a little practical manual of *Cottage Gardening* (W. & R. Chambers, Ltd.). The author, a gentleman of great experience, who has long cultivated flowers, fruits, and vegetables with exceptional success, supplies just the kind of information necessary to instruct the amateur how he may best manage his garden, while the book is written in an eminently readable and interesting style.

Nearly a year ago, a committee was appointed by the Board of Trade 'to inquire into the extent to which goods made in foreign prisons were imported into this country, and to report whether any, and if so, what steps can be taken effectually to restrict the importation of such goods.' This committee, after hearing a mass of evidence, has now made its report, and it is satisfactory to find that the various allegations which led to its appointment had very little foundation in fact. It seems that only two trades, the brushmakers and matmakers, have made serious complaint of injury—and such complaints are confined to Belgian and German goods. These goods, the committee assert, are not imported in such quantities as to affect British trade generally. In both the trades named the injury is but slight, and affects only the cheapest class of goods. Brushes can, in fact, be made more cheaply by machinery in Britain than they can be made abroad by prison labour, and the trade is on the increase. Any steps to restrict the importation of prison-made goods would, the committee think, be productive of more harm than good. It would therefore seem that this committee have been set to work at the discovery of what is commonly known as a mare's nest.

'Every bullet has its billet,' says the proverb, but experience proves that happily the billet is not so often the human body as might be expected. The common estimate has been that on the field of battle one man falls for every hundred shots fired, but this waste of lead seems to have been much exceeded in the recent unfortunate skirmish in the Transvaal. A correspondent in the *Times* alludes to this in a letter headed 'Boer Marksmanship,' upon the boasted accuracy of which he throws grave doubts. The Boers, it will be remembered, numbered fifteen hundred men, and they were practically in ambush, waiting to attack a force one-third the strength of their own, consisting of utterly worn-out men incapable of much resistance. They each had forty rounds of ammunition, and were supplied with more during the thirty-six hours' fight. Supposing, however, they only used the forty shots per man, this would amount in the aggregate to sixty thousand bullets fired, with the result of

sixty-eight casualties—the total number of killed and wounded. For every man knocked over there were therefore nearly nine hundred bullets sent astray, to say nothing of the Maxim and artillery fire. Had the Boers been the expert marksmen they have been supposed to be, not a single member of Dr Jameson's band would have escaped without a wound.

The explosion of an *aérolite* is an occurrence which is so seldom witnessed, that the recent event reported from Madrid has naturally excited great interest. It was literally 'a bolt from the blue,' for the sun was shining at the time when the strange visitant made its appearance. It is, however, fair to assume that such things are far less rare than is commonly supposed; for when we consider that four-fifths of the globe is covered with ocean, and that the remaining fifth presents vast tracts of unoccupied country, it must be evident that meteoric stones might find many a resting-place on the earth without the cognisance of a single human being. Our museums contain many specimens of solid matter, weighing from a few ounces to as many tons, which have come from space. But it is known from the presence of meteoric dust on the surface of the highest snow, where dust of the ordinary kind is impossible, that these visitants are generally dissipated in that form when they enter our atmosphere.

'WHY I ENLISTED.'

A REMINISCENCE.

By W. FORBES MITCHELL,
Author of *Reminiscences of the Great Mutiny*.

I AM a Scotchman from north of the Grampians, a descendant of one of the oldest Jacobite families of the memorable 1745, who risked and lost all for the House of Stuart and 'Bonnie Prince Charlie.' My great-grandfather fell at Culloden, and my grandfather was one of those for whose capture a heavy reward was offered in 1746. My father was born at Florence in 1769, and died at the age of one hundred and three in 1872—having been presented to Prince Charles Edward as titular King of England some time before his death. It will thus be seen that I belong to only the second generation from 'Prince Charlie.'

In the days when I was young, whisky-distilling was a lucrative business, and towards the end of the first half of the present century I was apprenticed to learn its mysteries in one of the largest distilleries of the Highlands. Full of hope and a determination to work and become a master of my business, I entered on my apprenticeship, and was placed under the orders of a worthy old Highlander named Donald Macpherson, who was a relation of Cluny, the chief of the clan, but filled the post of head-brewer (a distiller in Scotland is called a brewer) and general superintendent of the distillery. Among the first lessons which Donald taught me was that it was not by any means a sin, but rather a meritorious act, to cheat the excisemen in every possible way.

I must now pass to about the year 1853, when the harvest proved to be unusually late

in the Highlands, and there was a deal of mildewed or damaged barley. My readers will understand that malt made from such barley is inferior to that made from sound barley, and if used for brewing beer, it gives the liquor a disagreeable musty flavour. But this defect can be corrected to a large extent if a little powdered sulphur is thrown into the kiln fire when malt of this sort is being dried. I should explain that malt in the Highlands is dried on a perforated kiln over the fire, and the smoke passes up through the grain. This is what imparts to Scotch whisky its peculiar smoky flavour. At the time of which I write there was a heavy duty on malt, as well as on spirits, and the operations of malting were entirely separate from those of distilling or brewing. Besides, the excise officers were most particular, some of them annoyingly so, in gauging all raw barley put into the steep for malting, and again during the operations of malting, and when the malt was being dried on the kiln. But in spite of all their watchfulness, a few quarters of extra barley would occasionally pass over the kiln. About this time a new preventive officer joined the excise staff of our distillery, direct from England. This man took up the place of the most obliging gauger whom we had, and he soon showed himself to be more troublesome than any member of the excise staff who had been in the district for many years. In consequence, he was thoroughly hated, not only by the men employed in the distillery, but by his own fellow-servants of the Government; it being firmly believed that he had been sent as a spy on them as well as on the servants of the distillery. To add (if that were possible) to his other evil qualities in the eyes of distillers and gaugers, he was a strict teetotaler, and went by the nickname of 'Water Willie.' If any one hated Water Willie more than another, that man was old Donald Macpherson, who openly declared his belief that Water Willie was no other than a certain 'Gauger Gillespie risen from the dead.' The said Gillespie was a supervisor of the excise staff, highly unpopular throughout the north country, and hanged at Aberdeen.

However, if Water Willie watched the distillery staff closely, he was as well watched in return; and for months he was held at defiance and unable to even hint that anything was wrong. But a few days before Christmas he tried a *ruse*, by giving out that he had been invited to spend Christmas-eve with the family of an English gentleman residing some miles from the distillery; and this being believed, several quarters of extra barley were secretly malted and ready to be kiln-dried before the appointed evening. Late in the afternoon, the day before Christmas, Water Willie gauged the malt on the kiln and that in the malt loft ready to be dried, and sent in his daily report to his superior, apparently satisfied that everything was as it ought to be. After submitting his report, Water Willie dressed and left the premises, wishing every one, myself amongst the number, a hearty good-night and a merry Christmas. That evening it was my turn to take charge of the kiln, and in consequence of a few quarters of extra malt being on it that

had never been dipped by Water Willie's gauging-rod, I was keeping up a brisk fire. Towards eight o'clock I was about to lower the fire to clear the kiln when a boy, whom I had placed as an outlook, rushed in with the information that Water Willie was not only in the distillery, but that he was actually on the kiln dipping the malt with his gauging-rod. I was almost dumbfounded, but did not lose my presence of mind; I listened, and sure enough I heard some one stealthily moving about on the kiln above. What to do I did not very clearly know, but one thing I was certain of—the fine on the proprietor would not be less than £500, and the confiscation of all the malt on the kiln. And the hated Water Willie would get half of the total!

In my perplexity I glanced round, and my eye lighted on a small barrel of finely powdered sulphur, meant to be used in the case of mildewed barley. The only thing I thought of was my duty to the distillery. I did not for a moment think of the danger to the life of Water Willie. I could only think of the fine on the proprietor and the disgrace to all concerned in being outmanœuvred and caught by such a contemptible opponent. I seized the shovel in the barrel and threw a shovelful of the brimstone on the fire, not with the intention of suffocating or killing the gauger, but in the hope that the fumes of the sulphur would drive him off the kiln before he had time to fully gauge the malt on it. My pungent remedy was, however, more deadly than I intended, owing to the fierce fire which I was still keeping up. I had hardly thrown the sulphur on it than, to my horror, I heard a heavy body fall overhead. Rushing up to the kiln, I found the sulphur fumes so powerful that it would have been courting suspended animation, not to say death, to have entered on it. Fortunately there was a barn-yard pitchfork with a long handle near; so seizing this, in a moment I had inserted the prongs of it behind the hinges of the door, and bent them like a double boat-hook. With this I hooked Water Willie by the clothes, and with the assistance of the boy dragged his insensible body to the open air. I then sent the boy flying for my trusty friend and mentor, Donald Macpherson, who, to use a police phrase, 'was immediately on the spot.' Donald, as soon as he heard the word 'sulphur,' took in the whole situation at a glance; he at once stretched out the insensible gauger, opening out his collar and chest; and ascertaining that his heart still beat, he gave a grunt of satisfaction in Gaelic, and then gave orders for the immediate clearance and safe custody of the extra malt on the kiln.

These orders having been given to trusty subordinates, Donald turned his attention to the fumigated gauger, who still showed little appearance of returning to his senses. But luck was still in our favour. The village doctor had been dining with the proprietor, and had not left the house. Donald called the master and speedily informed him of the whole catastrophe. He in turn informed the doctor, and the still insensible gauger was soon consigned to his care and that of the mistress

and female servants of the house. Donald regretfully hinted to the maid-servants that Willie had been at a party and broken his pledge. As if to confirm this view of the case, about a gill of whisky had been poured down Willie's throat, and his clothes well saturated with it, in the hopes of reviving him, so the idea was apparently converted into a fact beyond dispute. Matters having been thus arranged, the proprietor had time to learn how it had all come about, and my friend Donald told him with many emphatic ejaculations that, by my prompt action, I had saved both the honour of the distillery and the master's purse. He further swore in classic Gaelic—Donald always spoke in Gaelic when excited, English being too vulgar to express his meaning—that I was a rare boy, and would certainly become a distiller of renown, and would be—'Transported if not hanged,' broke in the proprietor in vulgar English; 'and the sooner he is out of the Glen the safer it will be for himself and all concerned.'

Donald tried to reason with the master to get him to change his opinion, arguing that all that was necessary was for every one about the distillery to maintain that Water Willie had gone away and returned drunk. But the master reasoned in return that such a course was impossible; that although the doctor with his wonted friendliness would assist as far as he could, still this case might have to go before a court of law, and he knew the good old doctor would not perjure himself for the value of all the whisky in the cellars of the distillery. Although the ill-used man was slowly coming round, he was by no means out of danger; and the master was confident that after the gauger came to his senses and remembered the facts, his word would be taken by the Inland Revenue authorities at Somerset House against the oaths of the whole population of the neighbourhood. It was therefore necessary that I should be turned out into the wilderness of the world, as the scapegoat for the sins of the distillery as well as my own.

My carpet-bag was soon packed, and I was instructed to make my way to the good city of Aberdeen, not by the direct route, but by crossing the mountains—no easy matter at that season of the year—to a roadside inn about sixty miles from the Glen, where I could wait for the stage-coach carrying the Royal Mail from the Central Highlands to Aberdeen. So with ten pounds in my pocket, and my carpet-bag on Donald's back, I started, and on the evening of the second day I reached the inn where I was to take the stage-coach. At 10 A.M., the third day from my adventure, I was an outside passenger by the 'Earl of Fife,' on my way to Aberdeen at the speed of ten miles an hour; and before night I was safely lodged in Dee Street in the house of a certain Janet Gordon, an aunt of my former master. Here I remained quietly for ten days.

At this juncture a letter came to Janet, informing her that Water Willie had fully recovered and had sent a special report to the authorities of Somerset House of the dastardly attempt on his life. An official of high position and experience in the Inland Revenue

department had been sent from London to thoroughly investigate the matter, and the local police had been directed to produce the young man who was in charge of the kiln the night that Water Willie was fumigated. This information was accompanied by £50 in £5 Bank of England notes, with the intimation that the next mail would bring a description of me to the police authorities of Aberdeen, so that it would consequently be prudent for me to visit a maternal uncle in France, till I should receive further instructions. The next morning I had secured a cabin on board the s.s. *City of Aberdeen*, and was on my way to London, intending to go thence to Dover and cross to France. I was not by any means joyful at the prospect before me. I had before this spent several years of my early life with this uncle, and although I was really fond of the old man and was much liked by him in return, still there was a *but* in the question. My uncle was married to a French lady, and although they had no children of their own, my aunt-in-law had a number of poor relations. Naturally, I was no favourite with either her or them; I was looked on as a dangerous interloper who might be remembered in my uncle's will. Consequently I did not relish the prospect before me. Whilst brooding over my prospects, promenading the deck of the steamer, I being almost the only first-class passenger, I espied a sergeant of the 93d Sutherland Highlanders returning from Inverness, where he had been on furlough, to join the depot of the 93d in the Isle of Wight. I made up to the sergeant, who was pacing the deck in the clear moonlight, and got into conversation with him as to the prospects of a war with Russia, the 93d having lately embarked at Plymouth for Malta as the advance guard of the future army of the Crimea. The gallant sergeant entertained me with a full and complete history of that glorious regiment the 93d Sutherland Highlanders, at that time the most thoroughly Scottish, and by far the most Highland of all the Highland regiments. They had over seven hundred men in the ranks who could speak Gaelic—and of those at least three hundred and fifty were the younger sons of Highland gentlemen, serving a short apprenticeship to qualify them for commissions in the Guards or the other famous corps of the army. He concluded by reciting an address by General Sir Harry Smith to the troops before embarkation.

Having drunk the sergeant's health and that of his gallant comrades, I told him that I had made up my mind to enlist. He at once produced a shilling—or rather he borrowed one from myself, assuring me that if I would condescend to receive it back in the Queen's name (God bless her!), I would be captain of a company before twelve months. I took back the shilling in all good faith, and the next day, on reaching London, I was brought before a magistrate and was attested, having first passed a medical inspection by a recruiting surgeon.

The following day the recruiting officer in London, taking advantage of the return of the sergeant of the 93d to the Isle of Wight, determined to forward a large batch of recruits under his charge to Portsmouth for the artillery

and different corps in the Portsmouth garrison. So the next day we were marched to the railway station, and put into the train under the usual passage warrants for the transport of recruits. But it turned out that the train was rather crowded, and there was barely room in the third class for the whole batch. Meanwhile, as they were being packed in, an old gentleman of a military appearance, to whom I noticed the recruiting officer gave a most respectful military salute, walked along the platform taking the measure of each recruit as he passed. When he came to where I stood, with my Highland plaid around my shoulders and my carpet-bag in one hand and portmanteau in the other, he surveyed me from head to foot, and turning to the recruiting officer, asked if I was also a recruit. Being answered in the affirmative, and that I was for the 93d Highlanders in Parkhurst Barracks, he turned to a young gentleman, also in plain clothes, and said, 'Take him to our carriage.' So I was provided with a seat in a reserved first-class compartment, and before I had time to thank my courteous patron, or to think of my good luck, the train moved off. There were only four of us in the carriage, the old gentleman and two young ones, both of military appearance, but in plain travelling clothes, and one had charge of a well-filled luncheon basket.

Shortly after the train moved out of the station, my patron entered into conversation with me. On his asking me where I had enlisted and so forth, I told him that it was on board the Aberdeen steamer in coming from the north to London. He also asked if I had any objection to tell him what had led me to take this step, because I did not appear to be of the ordinary class of recruits. After pledging the party to secrecy, I gave a brief history of my escapade with Water Willie, and all three seemed to enjoy the history vastly. The old gentleman laughed till he had to hold his sides, and then congratulated me on the lucky circumstance, that Water Willie had only been fumigated and not suffocated. This led up to the history of my meeting with the sergeant of the 93d and my enlistment. Warming to my subject, I recited the whole of the sergeant's story as to the superior class of men in the 93d, and wound up with the address of General Sir Harry Smith to the regiment before their embarkation. The old gentleman roared with merriment, the tears running out of his eyes, and as soon as he could speak he shouted: 'Another such story will be the death of me.' Thus the time passed, and as the train sped along we were well supplied with refreshments from the luncheon basket—which, I need hardly say, I heartily enjoyed, for I had not eaten anything before leaving the recruiting rendezvous.

As we were nearing Portsmouth the old gentleman gave me some pieces of practical advice more in fun than in earnest. The preface to his advice was: 'Youngster, if you are not hanged or shot, you will yet cut some figure in the world or I'm much mistaken.' He then went on: 'When you join your regiment, always do what you are ordered to do, but

never volunteer for anything.' To this I replied that I had always understood that it was considered the correct thing in the army for soldiers to volunteer for a 'forlorn hope.' To this he replied: 'Yes, it may be considered the correct thing to volunteer for a forlorn hope, but don't you do it, unless under very exceptional circumstances, because the chances are a hundred to one that you may get knocked on the head, and even if you are lucky enough to escape with a whole skin, the chances are you will gain more ill-will than thanks for your pains.' The next advice was: 'Never ask a favour from the colour-sergeant of your company when you can go to the captain.' And as he helped himself from a bottle of excellent claret in the luncheon basket, he said: 'When you rise a bit in the world, as I'm sure you will do, always barring you are not hanged or shot, if it ever happens that you are at the saloon-table travelling on a passenger steamer, watch both the dishes and the bottle from which the skipper helps himself. Be sure you eat and drink from the same, and, as a rule, you will be sailing on the right tack and will reach port in safety.'

Shortly afterwards the train reached Portsmouth, and before leaving the carriage to join the other recruits, I asked the name of my affable patron; in reply he presented me with a visiting-card, telling me to take it to the captain of the depot, and 'tell him that it is my request that you may be sent to join headquarters of the 93d by the first draft.' On this he disappeared in the crowd, and I made my way to the nearest lamp-post to read the name on the card. The reader may judge of my surprise when I read thereon, 'Lieutenant-general Sir Harry Smith.'

We duly reached Parkhurst Barracks at about 10 P.M., and I was accommodated in a room which contained about twenty men, mostly recruits, with a few old hands to coach the young ones in barrack-room discipline. One of the old soldiers, named John McDonald the fourth—there being three others of the same name in the company—slept in the next bed to me, and as soon as the pipers played the *reveille* next morning, John showed me how to fold up my bedding in proper order, and to make everything tidy for the inspection of the orderly officer.

Long afterwards I heard the result of Water Willie's report to Somerset House. In that report he committed an error of judgment in including the name of his supervisor, who was accused of being hand and glove with the proprietor of the distillery in endeavouring to cheat the excise. For this he was put on trial, when the distiller and supervisor were exonerated; but Water Willie was found guilty of certain irregularities in this and former reports, for which he was dismissed from the service. Twenty years after these events I met Water Willie serving as a convict in one of our Indian jails. He began a downward career by embezzling the funds of a Regimental Temperance Society, while employed as an army Scripture reader, and afterwards swindled several shopkeepers and jewellers in Calcutta. He was sentenced to five years' rigorous imprisonment

by the High Court of Calcutta, and so far as I know, the end of his career was that he was deported from India as a vagrant about 1875. I heard afterwards that he was employed by the Italian Government at Brindisi, during one of our periodic cholera scares, fumigating all passengers from Indian ports passing through Italy, as a precaution to prevent the spread of Indian cholera to Europe, and here for the present endeth the history of Water Willie and why I enlisted.

ONE HEART.

I SOMETIMES linger o'er the list
Of friends I lost in other days,
And still the question with me stays—
'When I am gone shall I be missed?'

I doubt if others think the same,
Or even wish to share my thought—
That men were foolish who have sought
To leave a never-dying name.

When thou hast run thine earthly race,
Thou wilt not 'leave a world in tears,'
Nor will men come in after years
To view thine earthly resting-place.

Thy poor remains will rest as well,
Thy spirit will be no less free,
Although it is not thine to be
A Milton or a Raphael.

Fret not thyself but Heaven thank
If all the good that thou canst do,
May be so done that only few
Need ever know thy place is blank.

Be thankful if but one true heart
Shall feel for thee the moment's pain—
Ere it can say 'we meet again'—
Of knowing what it is to part.

One loving heart thou mayest crave,
Lest all thou caredst for on earth
Should seem to have no lasting worth
And end for ever in the grave.

One faithful heart beneath the sky,
In which to leave a seed of love,
To blossom in a world above
And bear a fruit which shall not die.

C. J. BODEN.

* * * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 640.—VOL. XIII.

SATURDAY, APRIL 4, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

THE MAHALAPSI DIAMOND.

A SOUTH AFRICAN STORY.

By H. A. BRYDEN.

CHAPTER I.

It was a fine warm evening at Kimberley, and Frank Farnborough, just before the dinner hour at the 'Central,' was fortifying his digestion with a glass of sherry and bitters, and feeling on very good terms with himself. He had put in an excellent day's work at De Beers, that colossal diamond company's office, where he had the good fortune to be employed, and had that morning received from his chief an intimation that his salary had been raised to four hundred pounds per annum. Four hundred per annum is not an immense sum in Kimberley, where living is dear all round; but for a young man of five-and-twenty, of fairly careful habits, it seemed not so bad a stipend. And so Frank sat down to the excellent *menu*, always to be found at the 'Central,' at peace with the world and with a sound appetite for his dinner. Next to him was a fellow-member of the principal Kimberley cricket team, and, as they were both old friends and enthusiasts, they chatted freely. Everywhere around them sat that curious commingling of mankind usually to be seen at a Kimberley *table d'hôte*—diamond dealers, Government officials, stock-brokers, detectives, Jews, Germans, Englishmen and Scots, and a few Irish, hunters and traders from the far interior, miners, prospectors, concessionaries, and others. A few women leavened by their presence the mass of mankind, their numbers just now being increased by some members of a theatrical company playing in the town.

As for Frank and his companion, they drank their tall tankards of cool lager, ate their dinners, listened with some amusement to the impossible yarns of an American miner from

the Transvaal, and, presently rising, sought the veranda chairs and took their coffee. In a little while Frank's comrade left him for some engagement in the town.

Frank finished his coffee and sat smoking in some meditation. He was on the whole, as we have seen, on good terms with himself, but there was one little cloud upon his horizon, which gave pause to his thoughts. Like many other young fellows, he lodged in the bungalow house of another man; that is, he had a good bedroom and the run of the sitting-rooms in the house of Otto Staarbrucker, an Afrikander of mixed German and Semitic origin, a decent fellow enough, in his way, who ran a store in Kimberley. This arrangement suited Frank Farnborough well enough; he paid a moderate rental, took his meals at the 'Central,' and preserved his personal liberty intact. But Otto Staarbrucker had a sister, Nina, who played housekeeper, and played her part very charmingly. Nina was a colonial girl of really excellent manners and education. Like many Afrikanders, nowadays, she had been sent to Europe for her schooling, and having made the most of her opportunities, had returned to the Cape a very charming and well-educated young woman. Moreover, she was undeniably attractive, very beautiful most Kimberley folks thought her. On the mother's side there was blood of the Spanish Jews in her veins—and Nina, a sparkling yet refined brunette, showed in her blue-black hair, magnificent eyes, warm complexion, and shapely figure, some of the best points of that Spanish type.

These two young people had been a good deal together of late—mostly in the warm even-

ings, when Kimberley people sit in their verandas—stoeps, they call them in South Africa—cooling down after the fiery heat of the corrugated iron town. It was pleasant to watch the stars, to smoke the placid pipe, and to talk about Europe and European things to a handsome girl, who took small pains to conceal her friendliness for the strong, well set-up, manly Englishman, who treated her with the deference of a gentleman (a thing not always understood in South Africa), and withal could converse pleasantly and well on other topics than diamonds, gambling, and sport. Frank Farnborough, as he ruminated over his pipe this evening out there in the 'Central' fore-court—garden, I suppose one should call it—asked himself a plain question.

'Things are becoming "steep,"' he said to himself. 'I am getting too fond of Nina, and I half believe she's inclined to like me. She's a nice and a really good girl, I believe. One could go far for a girl like her. And yet—that Jewish blood is a fatal objection. It won't do, I'm afraid, and the people at home would be horrified. I shall have to chill off a bit, and get rooms elsewhere. I shall be sorry, very sorry, but I don't like the girl well enough to swallow her relations, even supposing I were well enough off to marry, which I am not.'

As if bent upon forthwith proving his new-found mettle, the young man soon after rose and betook himself along the Du Toit's Pan road, in the direction of his domicile. Presently he entered the house and passed through to the little garden behind. As his form appeared between the darkness of the garden and the light of the passage, a soft voice, coming from the direction of a low table on which stood a lamp, said, 'That you, Mr Farnborough?'

'Yes,' he returned, as he sat down by the speaker. 'I'm here. What are you doing, I wonder?'

'Oh, I'm just now deep in your *Malay Archipelago*. What a good book it is, and what a wonderful time Wallace had among his birds and insects; and what an interesting country to explore! This burnt-up Kimberley makes one sigh for green islands, and palm-trees, and blue seas. Otto and I will certainly have to go to Kalk Bay for Christmas. There are no palm-trees, certainly, but there's a delicious blue sea. A year at Kimberley is enough to try even a bushman.'

'Well,' returned Frank, 'one does want a change from tin shanties and red dust occasionally. I shall enjoy the trip to Capetown too. We shall have a pretty busy time of it with cricket in the tournament week; but I shall manage to get a dip in the sea now and then, I hope. I positively long for it.'

As Nina leaned back in her big easy-chair, in her creamy Surah silk, and in the half-light of the lamp, she looked very bewitching, and not a little pleased, as they chatted together. Her white teeth flashed in a quick smile to the compliment which Frank paid her, as the conversation drifted from a butterfly caught in the garden, to the discovery he had made that she was one of the few girls in Kimberley who

understood the art of arraying herself in an artistic manner. She rewarded Frank's pretty speech by ringing for tea.

'What a blessing it is,' she went on, leaning back luxuriously, 'to have a quiet evening. Somehow, Otto's friends pall upon one. I wish he had more English friends. I'm afraid my four years in England have rather spoilt me for Otto's set here. If it were not for you, indeed, and one or two others now and again, things would be rather dismal. Stocks, shares, companies, and diamonds, reiterated day after day, are apt to weary female ears. I sometimes long to shake myself free from it all. Yet, as you know, here am I, a sort of prisoner at will.'

Frank, who had been pouring out more tea, now placed his chair a little nearer to his companion's as he handed her her cup.

'Come,' he said, 'a princess should hardly talk of prisons. Why, you have all Kimberley at your beck and call, if you like. Why don't you come down from your pedestal and make one of your subjects happy?'

'Ah!' she said, with a little sigh, 'my prince hasn't come along yet. I must wait.'

Frank, I am afraid, was getting a little out of his depth. He had intended his last speech to be diplomatic and had manifestly failed. He looked up into the glorious star-lit sky, into the blue darkness; he felt the pleasant, cool night air about him; he looked upon the face of the girl by his side—its wonderful Spanish beauty, perfectly enfram'd by the clear light of the lamp. There was a shade of melancholy upon Nina's face. A little pity, tinged with an immense deal of admiration, combined with almost overpowering force to beat down Frank's resolutions of an hour or two back. He took the girl's hand into his own, bent his head and lightly kissed it. It was the first time he had ventured so much, and the contact with the warm, soft, shapely flesh thrilled him.

'Don't be down on your luck, Nina,' he said. 'Things are not so bad. You have at all events some one who would give a good deal to be able to help you—some one who'—

At that moment, just when the depression upon Nina's face had passed, as passes the light cloud wrack from before the moon, a man's loud, rather guttural voice was heard from within the house, and a figure passed into the darkness of the garden. At the sound the girl's hand was snatched from its temporary occupancy.

'Hallo! Nina,' said the voice of Otto, her brother, 'any tea out there? I'm as thirsty as a salamander.'

The tea was poured out, the conversation turned upon indifferent topics, and for two people the interest of the evening had vanished.

Next morning, early, Frank Farnborough found a note and package awaiting him. He opened the letter, which ran thus:

'KIMBERLEY (In a dickens of a hurry).

'MY DEAR FRANK—Have just got down by post-cart, and am off to catch the train for Capetown, so can't possibly see you. I had a good,

if rather rough, time in Mangwato. Knowing your love of natural history specimens, I send you with this a small crocodile, which I picked up in a dried, mummified condition in some bush on the banks of the Mahalapsi River—a dry watercourse running into the Limpopo. How the crocodile got there, I don't know. Probably it found its way up the river-course during the rains, and was left stranded when the drought came. Perhaps it may interest you; if not, chuck it away. Good-bye, old chap. I shall be at Kimberley again in two months' time, and will look you up.—Yours ever,

HORACE KENTBURN.

Frank smiled as he read his friend's characteristic letter, and turned at once to the parcel—a package of sacking, some three and a half feet long. This was quickly ripped open, and the contents, a miniature crocodile, as parched and hard as a sun-dried ox-hide, but otherwise in good condition, was exposed.

'I know what I'll do with this,' said Frank to himself; 'I'll soak the beast in my bath till evening, and then see if I can cut him open and stuff him a bit; he seems to have been perfectly sun-dried.'

The crocodile was bestowed in a long plunge bath, and covered with water. Frank found it not sufficiently softened that evening, and had to skirmish elsewhere for a bath next morning in consequence. But the following evening, on taking the reptile out of soak, it was found to be much more amenable to the knife; and after dinner, Frank returned to his quarters prepared thoroughly to enjoy himself. First he got into some loose old flannels; then tucked up his sleeves, took his treasure finally out of the bath, carefully dried it, placed it stomach upwards upon his table, which he had previously covered with brown paper for the purpose, and then, taking up his sharpest knife, began his operations. The skin of the crocodile's stomach was now pretty soft and flexible; it had apparently never been touched with the knife, and Frank made a long incision from the chest to near the tail. Then, taking back the skin on either side, he prepared to remove what remained of the long-mummified interior. As he cut and scraped hither and thither, his knife came twice or thrice in contact with pieces of gravel. Two pebbles were found and put aside, and again the knife-edge struck something hard.

'Hang these pebbles!' exclaimed the operator; 'they'll ruin my knife. What the dickens do these creatures want to turn their intestines into gravel-pits for, I wonder?'

His hand sought the offending stone, which was extracted and brought to the lamp-light. Now this pebble differed from its predecessors—differed so materially in shape and touch, that Frank held it closer yet to the light. He stared hard at the stone, which, as it lay between his thumb and forefinger, looked not unlike a symmetrical piece of clear gum-arabic, and then, giving vent to a prolonged whistle, he exclaimed, in a tone of suppressed excitement, 'By all that's holy! A fifty carat stone! Worth hundreds, or I'm a Dutchman.'

He sat down, pushed the crocodile farther

from him, brought the lamp nearer, turned up the wick a little, and then, placing the diamond—for diamond it was—on the table between him and the lamp, proceeded to take a careful survey of it, turning it over now and again. The stone resembled in its shape almost exactly the bull's-eye sweetmeat of the British school-boy. It was of a clear, white colour, and when cut would, as Frank Farnborough very well knew, turn out a perfect brilliant of fine water. There was no trace of 'off-colour' about it, and it was apparently flawless and perfect. South African diamond experts can tell almost with certainty from what mine a particular stone has been produced, and it seemed to Frank that the matchless octahedron in front of him resembled in character the finest stones of the Vaal River diggings—from which the choicest gems of Africa have come.

Many thoughts ran through the young man's brain. Here in front of him, in the compass of a small walnut, lay wealth to the extent of some hundreds of pounds. Where did that stone come from? Did the crocodile swallow it with the other pebbles on the Mahalapsi river, or the banks of the adjacent Limpopo? Why, there might be—nay, probably was—another mine lying dormant up there—a mine of fabulous wealth. Why should he not be its discoverer, and become a millionaire? As these thoughts flashed through his brain, a hand was laid on his shoulder, and a merry feminine voice exclaimed, 'Why, Mr Farnborough, what have you got there?'

Frank seized the diamond, sprang up with flushed face and excited eyes, and was confronted with Nina and her brother, both regarding him very curiously.

Otto Staarbrucker spoke first. 'Hullo, Frank! You seem to be mightily engrossed. What's your wonderful discovery?'

The Englishman looked keenly from one to another of his interrogators, hesitated momentarily, then made up his mind and answered frankly, but in a low, intense voice.

'My wonderful discovery is this. Inside that dried-up crocodile I've found a big diamond. It's worth hundreds anyhow, and there must be more where it came from. Look at it, but for God's sake keep quiet about it.'

Staarbrucker took the stone from Frank, held it upon his big fat white palm, and bent down to the lamp-light. Nina's pretty, dark head bent down too, so that her straying hair touched her brother's as they gazed earnestly at the mysterious gem. Presently Otto took the stone in his fingers, held it to the light, weighed it carefully, and then said solemnly and sententiously, 'Worth eight hundred pounds, if it's worth a red cent!'

Nina broke in, 'My goodness, Frank—Mr Farnborough—where *did* you get the stone from, and what are you going to do with it?'

'Well, Miss Nina,' returned Frank, looking pleasantly at the girl's handsome, excited face, 'I hardly know how to answer you at present. That crocodile came from up-country, and I suppose the diamond came from the same locality. It's all tumbled so suddenly upon me, that I hardly know what to say or what to think. The best plan, I take it, is to have a

good night's sleep on it; then I'll make up my mind in the morning, and have a long talk with your brother and you. Meanwhile, I know I can trust to you and Otto to keep the strictest silence about the matter. If it got known in Kimberley, I should be pestered to death, and perhaps have the detectives down upon me into the bargain.'

'That's all right, Frank, my boy,' broke in Staarbrucker, in his big Teutonic voice; 'we'll take care of that. Nina's the safest girl in Kimberley, and this is much too important a business to be ruined in that way. Why, there may be a fortune for us all, where that stone came from, who knows?'

Already Otto Staarbrucker spoke as if he claimed an interest in the find; and although there was not much in the speech, yet Frank inly resented the patronising tone in which it was delivered.

'Well, I've pretty carefully prospected the interior of this animal,' said Frank, showing the now perfectly clean mummy. 'He's been a good friend to me, and I'll put him away, and we'll have a smoke.'

For another two hours, the three sat together on the stoep at the back of the house, discussing the situation. Staarbrucker fished his hardest to discover the exact whereabouts of the place from whence the crocodile had come. Frank fenced with his palpably leading questions, and put him off laughingly with, 'You shall know all about it in good time. For the present you may take it the beast came from his natural home somewhere up the Crocodile River.* Presently the sitting broke up, and they retired to their respective rooms. Nina's handshake, as she said good-night to Frank, was particularly friendly, and Frank himself thought he had never seen the girl look more bewitching.

'Pleasant dreams,' she said, as she turned away; 'I'm so glad of your luck. I suppose to-night you'll be filling your pockets with glorious gems in some fresh Tom Tiddler's ground. Mind you put your diamond under your pillow and lock your door. Good-night.'

Otto Staarbrucker went to his bedroom too, but not for some hours to sleep. He had too much upon his mind. Business had been very bad of late. The Du Toit's Pan mine had been shut down, and had still further depressed trade at his end of the town, and, to crown all, he had been gambling in Rand mines, and had lost heavily.

Otto's once flourishing business was vanishing into thin air, and it was a question whether he should not immediately cut his losses and get out of Kimberley with what few hundreds he could scrape together, before all had gone to ruin.

This diamond discovery of Frank Farnborough's somehow strongly appealed to his imagination. Where that magnificent stone came from, there must be others—probably quantities of them. It would surely be worth risking two or three hundred in exploration. Frank was a free, open-hearted fellow enough, and although not easily to be driven, would no

doubt welcome his offer to find the money for prospecting thoroughly upon half profits, or some such bargain. It *must* be done; there seemed no other reasonable way out of the tangle of difficulties that beset him. He would speak to Frank about it early in the morning. Comforted with this reflection, he fell asleep.

THE FAR DISTANCES OF OUR UNIVERSE.

By AGNES GIBERNE,

Author of *Sun, Moon, and Stars; Radiant Suns, &c.*

It is not accidentally, but on purpose, that the word 'our' is used in the name of this article. 'The' universe would be quite as correct, because 'our' universe is 'the' universe to us who live in it; and yet the distinguishing adjective might here mislead men's minds through failing to carry out its own proper office. Those who hear 'the universe' spoken of as descriptive of the stellar system do not always distinguish between this universe and other universes, between 'our' universe and universes which are not 'ours.'

It seems to be somewhat of a pity that the word has been allowed to fall into this particular use, as descriptive only of a starry system. Its original meaning, as defined in an etymological dictionary, is 'the universal or whole system of created things;' and until recent years 'the Universe' included the idea of all creation. Then the fact began to dawn upon astronomers that our particular starry system was *not* all creation, and one and another began to apply the word 'universe' to our starry system in particular, while other possible starry systems were also spoken of as 'other universes.' The alteration is somewhat of a pity, because there would seem to be no other word equally good to take its place in the old sense. One may speak of 'Creation' as inclusive of all universes or starry systems; but it might perhaps have been better had 'universe' been allowed to retain its proper meaning, as synonymous with 'all creation,' and as inclusive of all starry systems. Possibly we may yet in the course of years revert to this older signification of the term.

That such other starry systems do exist can hardly be questioned. Wide as are the limits of the stupendous system of stars, within which our little earth finds a home, that system has limits; it is not infinite in extent. Far, very far, as its distances reach, there is a surrounding belt of space, wherein the stars of our universe grow thinner and yet more thin, dying slowly out, like the scattered trees on the verge of some vast forest. And beyond those scattered border-stars is a mighty and dark void. But beyond the void other universes surely lie; not *our* universe, but brother universes to ours; perhaps greater in extent than the one in which our lot is cast. Whether the faintest gleam of light ever travels to us from those starry systems is a question which cannot be answered, because it depends upon other questions which still remain unsolved;

* The Limpopo River is in South Africa universally known as the Crocodile.

but that they actually exist we can hardly doubt. All astronomical analogies point in that direction. Beyond granting their probable existence, however, we know positively nothing about those outer systems of stars. We have enough to do in trying to explore our own.

The universe—our universe—the one starry system of which we can know anything definite, is composed of our sun with his attendant worlds; and of all the stars visible to us in the sky, whether seen by the naked eye or through telescopes, together with their attendant worlds; and of most if not all of the star-clusters and nebulae scattered among the stars.

'How far off are the stars?' asks somebody of an inquiring mind; and he is perhaps told in answer that such a star is so many thousands of millions of miles away, that such another is so many billions of miles away, that yet another is so many hundreds of billions of miles away. And very likely he shakes his head over the information, feeling that all three figures are alike to him. Millions are millions, and billions are billions; but the idea conveyed by both expressions, as applied to measurement of distance, is simply one of enormous extent. Millions and billions are much the same in one's imagination. If we wish to form any definite notion as to the extent of our starry system, it is best to begin with objects nearer at hand, and to widen the distance gradually in thought to those objects which lie farther off.

In all the heavens, with the exception of passing meteors or meteorites, not one body occupies a position closer to earth than the moon, which is some two hundred and forty thousand miles away. Very far, of course, side by side with any earthly distances, but a mere fraction side by side with other astronomical distances. Next to the moon our nearest occasional neighbour is Venus, and then Mars. Both Venus and Mars, however, are often farther away from us than the sun, which remains always at somewhere about the same distance, roughly at from ninety to ninety-three millions of miles. This dividing space between sun and earth is of great importance in thinking about the stars, and it should be clearly impressed upon the mind. Next to the sun, in point of nearness, come the more distant planets; Jupiter, which is about five times as far from the sun as our earth is; Saturn, nearly twice as far as Jupiter; Uranus, nearly twice as far as Saturn; and Neptune, nearly three times as far as Saturn. All these planets belong to our sun, all are members of his family, all are part of the solar system. The size of the solar system as a whole, consisting thus of the sun and his planets, including our earth, may be fairly well grasped by any one taking the trouble to master two simple facts. They are these—that our earth is roughly about ninety-two millions of miles away from the sun, and that Neptune, the outermost planet of the solar system, is nearly thirty times as far distant from the sun as our earth is.

Despite the actual greatness of the Solar System, as expressed in miles, it may be looked

upon as something very small indeed, compared with the vastness, the immensity, of the Stellar System—that 'universe' of which our entire solar system forms but one insignificant spot. To gain any true idea of the universe, it has been needful to begin with our sun's system; and a small beginning it is. Small in one sense. Our earth's diameter, eight thousand miles, is large if compared with the distance which divides London from St Petersburg, but it is a trifle compared with the gap which separates our earth from the moon. And the space between earth and sun, though vast if compared with that which divides earth from moon, is a mere *bagatelle* compared with the abyss which intervenes between our solar system and the nearest star.

Some people find a curious difficulty in mentally distinguishing between stars and planets. Again and again they hear that stars are suns, and that planets are worlds, that a sun is not a world, and that a planet is not a star; and their confusion of mind on the subject remains untouched. Yet the distinction is not really difficult to grasp, and to see it clearly is quite essential to any understanding of the heavens. Our sun is a star, brother to all those twinkling points which lie scattered over the night-sky. Our world is not a star but a planet, sister to the few shining but non-twinkling bright bodies which appear to wander slowly among the stars. The planets belong to our solar system—all of them, without exception, that we are able to see. Other planets belonging to other stars may and doubtless do exist in countless millions through the universe; but we have no power to detect their presence. They, like the planets which belong to our sun, shine by the reflected brightness of their particular star, not by their own intrinsic radiance; and so they cannot be seen at a very great distance. Any watcher, with eyesight and telescopes such as ours, gazing from the region of any star in the sky, outside our solar system, would see nothing whatever of the planets or the moons of our system. He might make out the sun, as a more or less dim star; he would not be able to detect Jupiter or Saturn, still less our little earth.

And it must be remembered that every single star in the whole universe lies outside our solar system, with only one exception. That exception is our sun. So by the Solar System we mean the little family or kingdom of one star, known to us as the sun; and that star is one of tens of millions of stars which all together make up the enormous Stellar System; and that stellar system is doubtless one of very many—perhaps millions—of stellar systems, all of which together make up the created Universe, using that word in its older and not in its more modern sense.

It is worth while making an effort to picture to ourselves the vast extent of the starry system, in which we reside. Having gained some faint notion of the extent of the lesser solar system, which occupies a small corner of the stellar system, we must work outward from that beginning. Let us take for our unit of measurement the space which separates earth from sun;

and let the ninety-two millions of miles of this distance be represented in our minds by one single inch. In proportion, the sun himself must be pictured by a tiny ball, less than one-hundredth of an inch in diameter; while our earth must be a mere speck, less than one-tenthousandth of an inch in diameter. And this little sun and this minute earth must be just one inch asunder.

Following out the same idea, Mercury and Venus, being closer to the sun than we are, have to be less than one inch away from him; while Jupiter will be five inches off, Saturn will be ten inches off, Uranus will be over nineteen inches off, Neptune will be almost thirty inches off. Then the solar system as a whole, leaving only out of the question certain comets which travel farther, will be enclosed in a circle, less than *two yards in diameter*.

The question arises next—what will be the proportionate size of the stellar system on this same scale of measurement? If the solar system is to be comprised with a hoop, not two yards across, how wide a space should we allow to the surrounding system of stars, 'our universe'? How near will be the nearest of outlying stars? And the answer is sufficiently startling. If the sun is reckoned to be one inch away from our earth, if Neptune is reckoned to be less than three feet away from the sun; then, on the same scale, the star which lies closest of all outer stars in the whole universe to us, Alpha Centauri by name, must be reckoned as lying at a distance of about *three and a half miles!* And between the two—nothing! At least, nothing in the shape of a star. An occasional comet may lag slowly along in the darkness, finding its way from one sun-system to another; and dark bodies, cooled suns, may possibly float here or there unseen by us; but of stars, radiant with heat and light, none are found in that wide area.

Astronomical writers sometimes talk of stars 'in the vicinity' of the sun; and this is what is meant by 'vicinity.' Think of the distances implied. Our whole solar system is first brought down into a small circle, two yards across—every inch in those yards standing for more than ninety millions of miles—and then, on every side and above and below, is an encompassing void of three and a half miles; every inch of those miles again representing more than ninety millions of miles. And then we come upon one gleaming star! Only one quite so near. Another star in the sun's 'vicinity,' known as 61 Cygni, would lie at a distance of seven miles; and the brilliant Sirius would be over ten miles off. Others must be placed at distances of twenty miles, fifty miles, one hundred miles. It is easy to start with a list of these figures; it is not easy to say where one should stop. That the starry system has limits we do not doubt; but to define those limits is not possible. On such a scale as is given above, those limits certainly would not lie within a distance of one hundred miles, nor of one thousand miles. It is believed that some dim stars, barely to be detected, may be ten thousand times as far away as our sun's nearest neighbour, Alpha Centauri; and this at once gives, even on our very much reduced scale, a

line from the centre of thirty-five thousand miles. Suppose that the limits of the stellar system lay somewhere about there. Thirty-five thousand miles each way from the centre would mean a diameter for the whole of seventy thousand miles. Imagine a starry system, seventy thousand miles across from side to side; each inch in those miles representing ninety-two millions of real miles; and somewhere in the midst of it our small solar system, just two yards across, separated from all other stars by a wide blank of three or four miles!

That would be stupendous enough. But we have no reason whatever for supposing that the limits of our universe do lie there. The true boundaries of the stellar system may be twice as far, four times as far, ten times as far. We do not even know with certainty that our solar system is placed anywhere near its centre, though this seems rather likely. Far off as the boundary reaches in one direction, it may reach much farther in another direction.

An illustration very commonly used, to convey some idea of star distances, is that of the passage of light; and an allusion to it here may tend to enforce the illustration already used. A ray of light travels at the rate of about one hundred and eighty-six thousand miles in one second. Light coming from the sun reaches us in less than nine minutes; and from Alpha Centauri in about four years and four months. Here again we have the wide surrounding void between our sun and all other stars. Here again we have to remember that beyond the nearer stars are multitudes of more distant stars, and that the light from them arrives here, not in four years, but in ten years, in twenty years, in fifty or a hundred years, in a thousand or five thousand years, and so on. Here again no limit can be definitely placed. It has been roughly calculated that the whole stellar system may perhaps consist of somewhere about one hundred millions of stars; but no doubt it may equally well consist of two hundred millions. It has also been roughly calculated, or conjectured, that the light of a star on one outer verge of the system may perhaps travel across the whole breadth of the system to the opposite outer verge in the course of some thirty thousand years—each instant of those thirty thousand years, darting through one hundred and eighty-six thousand miles of space. But the length of time occupied in this journey might equally well be fifty or sixty thousand years.

The entire universe must, one would think, be a marvellous tangle of star-beams; all these millions of suns sending forth each moment all their millions of light-rays; and all those rays, once started, travelling onward and onward in a direct line to the utmost extent of the system—how much farther still, who shall say?—unless stopped in mid-career. But although the rays are there in a sense, they are not visible as light, except when they strike upon and are checked by some object in their path. Space itself, through which these rays are hastening, may be said to be dark. The light is hidden till the beams are captured.

Another curious fact in connection with this

subject is the *historical* nature of starlight. What we see, when we look at the heavens, is the stars as they once were, not as they are at this moment. This is an oft-told truth, yet it can hardly be too often told, because it is not easy of realisation. Suppose that you are gazing at a distant lamp. You see that lamp as it was when the ray which now strikes your eye left it. No matter that the time between is very short; still it exists; for light always takes time to travel. If that lamp is put out, you continue to see it for a fraction of a second after its light has ceased to be. In the matter of a lamp, the fraction of time is too small to be appreciable; but in the matter of light from the stars, matters are widely different.

Here is a ray of sunlight resting on your face. That ray tells you of the state of the sun close upon nine minutes ago. It brings you a picture of the sun, as the sun was then. It does not tell you of the condition of the sun now, at this instant.

Look at bright Sirius, shining and twinkling in the sky. The ray of light that impinges on your eye-ball tells you what Sirius was like, more than ten years ago. It is quite conceivable that Sirius may no longer be exactly like that. Within the last six months Sirius *might* have undergone a collision with some other star, and might have blazed up in consequence with a tenfold splendour. Not at all likely, of course; but not among events utterly impossible. If things were so, the news would come to you, brought by star-beams travelling from Sirius—not to-morrow, or next year, but somewhere about ten years or more hence. From now till then all rays coming in from Sirius would have started before the collision took place, and so they would be able to say nothing about it. Speaking in human language, they would not know anything of that collision.

Or look through a telescope at some tiny star, invisible to the naked eye. The light from that star perhaps left its surface before the time of William the Conqueror. It may be—it is not quite impossible—that the tiny star has since those days actually left off shining; but still we see it in our sky, because the rays which started while it yet shone are arriving moment by moment, telling us the story of what the star was like, hundreds of years ago, before it parted with its brightness.

Perhaps again we are examining through a large telescope a faint and far-off nebula; a mass of whirling gases, the light of which has taken, say, ten thousand years to get here. We see what the nebula was like in prehistoric ages. It may since then have lessened in size and changed in shape. It may now wear a very different aspect; and men looking from earth, ten thousand years hence, will be able to see what that nebula was like in our days. All these things help us to understand what the immensity of the stellar system is—and yet more, to imagine dimly what the measureless extent of all creation must be, if many such star-systems float side by side throughout the vast domains of space.

One other fact must not be lost sight of; and this is, the rapid and incessant motion of

all the stars. Our starry system is no fixed and rigid mass. We talk indeed of 'fixed stars,' and our ancestors believed in them; but we now know better. The constellations keep their respective shapes through ages, yet such a phenomenon as an immovable star is not found in the universe. Not a star in the heavens remains ever for two consecutive seconds in the same place. Every distant sun is on the steady rush toward some goal; and each sun carries with him, wherever he goes, all his attendant worlds and satellites.

Our sun is speeding through space at the rate of many hundreds of thousands of miles each day; nevertheless, the enormous distance which separates us from the nearest star is not apparently thereby diminished. That is to say, we cannot see, we cannot take cognisance of, the diminishment. So wide and vast is the dividing chasm, that if our sun were to continue steadily onward at his present rate, and if the motion were straight towards Alpha Centauri, and if Alpha Centauri remained for ages where he is, we should not approach the actual neighbourhood of that star in less than one hundred and fifty thousand years.

And with other stars it is the same. They, too, are hastening onward, this way and that way. Most of them are doubtless held in and controlled by the whole mass of their companion-stars, each exerting a measure of attractive power over all the rest. Some few stars are known to be whirling along at speeds so terrific, that it has been seriously questioned whether all the stars in the stellar system can possibly hold them in—whether they are not mere passing visitants from some other starry system or universe, coming out from the black vista on one side, passing through our midst during a few millions of years of journeying, then plunging into the dark vista on the other side, never to return.

Things may be so. We know little about the matter; and until we can at least roughly number the stars of which our stellar system is formed, we cannot possibly calculate the power of control which they unitedly possess over any individual in their midst. If things were so, it would be, on a much vaster scale, somewhat analogous to the visitations of strange comets, often known in our solar system—comets coming from other sun-systems, passing among the planets, then rushing off in a new direction. We are a great deal more at home in affairs of the Solar System than in those of the Stellar System.

These wondrous 'far distances' of the universe, using the word in either its narrower or its wider sense, bring a sense of oppression and of bewilderment. Not miles upon miles, but millions of miles upon millions of miles are heaped together, till the brain refuses to accept the offered load. But, while it is not possible to picture to ourselves the reality of those immeasurable wastes, amid which distant stars at wide intervals are found to float, it is possible, by some such method as is offered above, to gain a notion of the *comparative* proportions of the world we live in, of the smaller system to which our world belongs, of the vaster system of which that little system forms a part, and of the

stupendous Universe of all creation, throughout which stars and star-systems innumerable are scattered like fine gold-dust by the Hand of the Divine Creator.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

By SIR WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XII.—MUTINY.

IN this manner was the emancipation of Isabel begun. It was effected, you have seen, by making her physically strong and well, by giving her courage, by providing her with something to think about, by relieving the monotony of her life, and, lastly, by the introduction, the treacherous introduction, of Love the Rebel.

'You've done wonders for the girl,' said the Captain one day. 'Wonders, you have. I don't hardly know her, she's so changed. Why, she sings now, and she plays her music half the day and every day. She that used to be such a shy and timid thing, afraid of her own voice. Perhaps, Sir George,' he would never abandon the title, it gave him a sense of self-importance to be talking with a baronet; 'perhaps you don't notice these trifles, but you must have seen the change that's come over the puddings.'

'No—really? Over the puddings?'

'There's a lightness about them, more jam, since the girl got brighter. Ah! It's quite natural. When the soul is heavy, the pudding comes out heavy too. And the teas are quite remarkable compared with what they were. There's a spiciness about the cake now.'

'Well, Captain, do you think that Robert has noticed any change?'

'No. He never notices anything.'

'Don't you think, Captain, that a word from you—'

'No, sir. He won't listen to one word, nor a thousand words, from anybody.'

'Consider, your daughter's happiness is at stake. Can any girl like to go on year after year engaged to a man who treats her with absolute neglect and icy coldness? Is it fair to keep a girl going on in this way year after year? Could he not, at least, take back his promise and set her free? You are her father; it is for you to interfere.'

The Captain froze instantly. 'Perhaps, Sir George, under ordinary circumstances that might be so. But you forget that we have eaten Robert's bread and slept under his roof for five years, and you forget besides that he is the most masterful man in the world, and he means to have his own way.'

'Still, to marry a girl against her will'—

'How do I know that it is against her will? To be sure she's a little afraid of him—many women are afraid of the man before they

marry. Afterwards it's different, and let me tell you, sir, that most women like a man to be masterful. They get their own way fast enough; but they like him to be masterful.'

'Perhaps; but this neglect of Robert's'—

'Never mind that. He'll make it up when they do marry. It's all there, only bottled up. These bottles do pour it out when the time comes—in the most surprising manner. You'll see what an appreciative husband he'll make some day. Let things be, Sir George. You've brought her health and roses; Robert, who will be grateful when he notices it, will do all the rest. I daresay she frets and peaks a bit for want of the kissing and the fondling that all girls naturally expect. Let her have a little patience, I say. And don't let's disturb things when they are comfortable, especially the puddings.'

We spoke no more of love. We continued to go about together with free and unrestrained discourse. As the evenings began to close in, we ceased the long journeys to villages and village churches, and took picture-galleries and concerts instead on Saturday afternoon. Or I remained in the evening at the house, while Isabel played and sang to me; she played much better already, and she sang with untrained sweetness. One evening, when the pianoforte was loaded with new music and new songs, and the books she was reading—she laid her hands upon them all. 'You have given me everything,' she said. 'But these things are only alleviations. The future is always before me—dark and horrible. Oh! I pray that it may be postponed so long as to become impossible. I shall grow old and ugly, and then I hope he will take back his promise.'

'Unless,' I said, 'he can be induced to take it back before.'

Then an incident took place which disquieted me very much indeed—a very dangerous incident. It was this: Robert was in his study after dinner forging an oration. Isabel was in the parlour practising. On the table was a bundle of papers and certain blue-books. He took up the books and began to turn over the leaves, marking passages. He wanted these passages copied to be used in his speech. He took paper and pen and began to copy. Then Isabel's playing reminded him of her. He got up, opened the door and called her.

She came obediently. That afternoon she was dressed in some light blue stuff with a ribbon and a flower, because she now loved a little touch of finery. The soft cheek, the depths of her eyes, her light feathery hair, her ethereal look might have moved the heart of St Anthony. So far they had produced no impression at all upon her lover.

He nodded when she appeared: nodded pleasantly: he had a very fine speech nearly ready: he had learned it by heart: it was certain to carry the people away: he only wanted these extracts copied.

'Take these blue-books,' he said, with the old tone of command. 'You will find the pages marked with a red pencil. Copy out all the

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passages marked, and let me have them by to-morrow morning.'

'I am no longer your clerk, Robert.'

'What?'

'I say that I am no longer your clerk. You released me three months ago. Had I continued, I believe I should have been dead by this time. I will not copy passages for you.'

'Isabel?' He was amazed.

'Let us understand each other. I am your housekeeper. I will do for the house anything and everything. I am not your clerk or your private secretary or your accountant. You must get some one else to do that work for you.'

'Isabel?'

'I am grateful to you for taking us in, and keeping us all these years. If you think I ought to do more for my father's maintenance and my own, I will give up and try for another place.'

'You are a fool, Isabel,' he said roughly.

'Very likely. Is it polite to tell me so? You have learned a great deal about the world of late, Robert; do you think it is polite to call the girl you are engaged to—a fool?'

'No—no—no—of course, I didn't mean that. But—Isabel—what in the world has come over you?'

He actually saw the change at last, or something of the change; not all of it, otherwise the subsequent history would be different. It was the very first time that the girl had ever refused work, or objected, or complained. For four or five months there had been slowly going on under his eyes the transformation of which you have heard; but because it was so slow and gradual, and because he was always completely absorbed in himself, and because he had never thought it necessary to consider the appearance of the girl at all, having still in him so much of the working man as not to desire beauty in his wife, and not to think about it—he had observed nothing. Now, however, when the word of resistance and refusal opened his eyes, he was amazed to see standing before him in the place of the mild, meek maiden, who humbly took whatever he gave, and humbly executed whatever he commanded, always with downcast eyes and hanging head, a lovely, airy, fairy creature, too dainty altogether for such a man as himself, a beautiful, bright, sunny girl, a head held upright, and steady eyes that met his own without the least fear or show of humility.

'Isabel!' he repeated, 'what in the name of wonder has come over you?'

'I don't know. You have been thinking about your own affairs, I suppose. But oh—it is nothing.' She turned to leave him, being, in fact, frightened at the admiration expressed in his eyes for the first time—quite a new expression, and it terrified her horribly.

'No, no; don't go, Isabel;' he leaned back in his chair. 'You are looking so wonderfully well, and—and pretty this afternoon.'

She began to tremble. Robert to say things complimentary?

'There is nothing more to say, is there?'

He leaned his chin in his left hand, and replied slowly. 'I remember now. George talked to me about you, Isabel, when he first

came. He said you were overworked. I don't always remember, perhaps, that you are only a girl. I may have given you too much to do.'

'I am only housekeeper now.'

'Very well, then. I don't mean to be unkind, you see. But, of course, I can't be always thinking about your health, and your whims, can I?'

'Of course not.'

'George said you wanted fresh air, and a change, and exercise, and all kinds of fiddle-faddle stuff, and to see how other girls carry on—so as to take your proper place when I have advanced myself. Well, I told him I wished he would take care of you, and take you about a bit, seeing that I couldn't afford the time myself. Has he taken you about?'

'Yes. All the summer. He has been most kind and generous.'

'George is that sort of man, I believe. Ready to waste any amount of time in dangle after a girl. Well, Isabel, as I could not dangle after you, I am very much obliged to him. And I must say that the change is wonderful. You look ever so much better. Your face, which used to be too pale, is full of colour, and your eyes are brighter—and—why, Isabel, give me your hands.'

He held out both hands, but Isabel made no response. And there was that look in his eyes which frightened her. He got up, not hastily, not like a Passionate Pilgrim, but slowly and with the dignity of possession and authority. Isabel trembled and shook. Between herself and the door stood Robert. She could not run away. She thought of crying for help—her father was in his own room—but a girl can hardly call out for protection against the threatened kiss of her engaged lover. And perhaps he didn't mean it after all. Yet his eyes looked hungry.

In the corner beside the fireplace stood one of those revolving bookcases filled with books; a heavy thing which turns round when pushed with zeal and vigour. Isabel retreated behind this bookcase. 'Let me go,' she cried. 'Do not touch me.'

'I don't want to hurt you,' he said. 'Come out of that corner, Isabel. Why, you are not a baby, and you are my girl. Come out quietly, and don't be silly.'

'No—you promised—you said that there should be no—no'—

'Oh! yes. Stuff and nonsense! I said so, I daresay. I couldn't interrupt work and distract my thoughts with fondling and kissing. Not to be expected. Besides, that was a year ago and more, and you were not the girl then that you are now. Come, Isabel, don't be shy.'

'No—no—I won't have it. I couldn't bear it. Oh, horrible! Let me go.' She gave the bookcase a vigorous shove, and it revolved ponderously with its weight of a hundred books. Robert fell back.

It is not pleasant for one's sweetheart to speak of a threatened kiss as horrible. His face grew dark.

'You are going to marry me, Isabel, I believe.'

'Not yet: not for a long time yet. Not till

you are an Archbishop of Canterbury, or something. And until we do marry, Robert, I will take you at your word. There shall be no fondling, as you call it.'

'When you marry me you will have to obey me. There can only be one master in one house.'

'I am not your wife yet, remember. I am not at your orders except as your housekeeper. Pray do not imagine that you have any right to command a woman because she has promised to be your wife. After I am your wife—if ever I am'—

He wavered. 'Of course,' he said, 'I cannot command your obedience so long as you are not my wife. But come out from that retreat and sit down and let us talk. I will not attempt to command you in anything. Perhaps we need not wait so long as first we thought. Perhaps—as soon as I am in the House'—

'No,' she replied. 'You must promise to let me go, or I will stay behind this bookcase all night.'

'You can go then, Isabel,' he replied, flinging himself into his chair. 'I will not stop you.'

She passed out without a word. But she was shaken: she went to her own room and sat down to think. Was Robert, too, changing? Was his ancient indifference turning into admiration: and though her experience of the manly heart was small, she felt by instinct that admiration might at any moment leap into passion: and passion into a demand for the fulfilment of her promise. 'Oh!' she groaned and cried, 'I cannot marry him—I cannot—I cannot—I would rather die.'

But she told no one, not even her physician. And that evening the furrow reappeared on her brow, and the cloud on her face, and Robert coming into tea saw again the maiden meek and mild, and wondered what had become of the princess, and why he had experienced, if only for a brief moment, that novel and singular feeling of admiration.

'George,' said Robert after tea, when we were alone. 'Women are queer, skittish creatures. There's Isabel now.'

'Yes. There is Isabel.'

'Formerly I had only to lift my little finger and she ran. She'd do just as much work as I pleased to order. To-day she flatly refused to do anything.'

'Quite right.'

'And when I told her—a man may surely say so much to his own girl—that she was changed and improved—which she certainly is—thanks to you—she wanted to run away.'

'Did she?'

'And when I offered to kiss her—a man may surely kiss his own girl—she shrieked out and ran behind the revolving bookcase.'

'Oh! Did she. But, I say, Robert, didn't you promise that there was to be no kissing and fondling and stuff?'

'Well—well—I did, I daresay. But who wanted to kiss the girl a year ago? It's different now. She's become an amazingly pretty girl. If it wasn't for this election business I would—I certainly would'—

'Better not,' I said solemnly. 'Much better not—yet.'

And now you understand how disquieting this incident was.

REMINISCENCES OF TYNESIDE.

Up to little more than half a century ago, the population, wholly seafaring, of the weather-beaten, salt-encrusted, muddy little seaport of Shields 'knew less of England and its people than of countries across the ocean and their multifarious inhabitants.' An isolated position, bad roads, and intense local jealousies were accountable for this; these hardy and unruly townfolk were indeed a people apart, embittered by centuries of battling for their rights, sometimes even their very existence, with their big bullying neighbour up the water, Newcastle. If these North Sea sailors, fishers, smugglers, or whatever else they might be, knew little of England, England for its part knew as little of them, and likely enough cared less. Nevertheless, North Shields has a romance and a history all its own, interesting even for those who know nothing of the town save the name. In *The 'Maister,' a Century of Tyneside Life*, by George H. Haswell (Walter Scott, 1895), although mainly a biography of Mr Haswell's father, Thomas Haswell, for fifty years a well-known and respected citizen of Shields, we have a most interesting and curious account of the seaport and its tempest-tossed life. While giving an historical account of Shields from the earliest times, the book deals more particularly with the last hundred years.

At the beginning of the century, when the Great War was in full swing, the 'sentinel of the Tyne' enjoyed an importance it never had before, and has barely had since. Shields, at that time, consisted of a single long narrow street, composed of old-fashioned, high-peaked houses, jumbled together in no particular order. One side of the street rested against the high 'Banks' of the river; the other, on the water's-edge, was propped up by wooden piles slanting out into the stream. 'Scarce a house on the river-side but had its ruinous wharf or its gaudy-painted balcony, on which a few fresh herring, "split and peppered," were hung out to dry among the newly-washed duds which bellied out in the wind. Here and there a ship's bowsprit, reaching across the street from a vessel in one of the graving-docks, might be seen hospitably accommodated by an opened window into which it projected, the good woman at her housework or toilet chatting nonchalantly with the sailor who, busied with some mending of its gear, sat astride the spar.'

Squalid and dirty as it was, Shields was an uproarious place. It had then, as now, a large coal trade, and the crews of the colliers, with men-of-wars' men, and seamen of almost every

nationality, crowded the wharves, streets, and closes. From the tap-rooms of the many public-houses 'came the scratching rhythm of a horn-pipe, the discordant uproar of a sea-song with tipsy chorus, or the clamours of a drunken fight. Jack-tars capered to wretched fiddle or hurdy-gurdy, or leaned out of crazy casements to squirt the well-churned succulence of a sapid quid at the bumboat woman, who was chaffering below with a mate or stevedore, or bandying unfeminine compliments with a sister crafts-woman.' The stay-ashore part of the community—most of those who did not go to sea had something to do with ships—were as roistering and riotous as their seafaring brethren; and, altogether, noise, riot, and confusion generally, reigned from morning to night, and just as often from night to morning.

Strange and exciting sights were to be seen here too, as was to be expected in a seaport situated in the very thick of the fight, as it were. In the end of 1799 seven transports, carrying upwards of one thousand Russians and Cossacks—a remnant of the Duke of York's expedition to Holland—were driven into the Tyne through stress of weather. These truly strange foreigners, decidedly uncleanly, 'but very religious, strong, and robust,' came ashore in droves, and the Cossacks especially were objects of absorbing interest, being followed about by admiring groups, and the gorgeous and dazzling uniforms of the officers completely turned the heads of the female portion of Shields. This is, perhaps, the only instance of a Russian descent in force (although fortunately a friendly one) on our shores; always excepting, of course, these unfortunate Muscovites, who, more than fifty years afterwards, were compelled to accept our hospitality, much against their will. The fear of a hostile descent was ever present, and to guard against surprise, a heavy chain was stretched across the river-mouth, with windlasses at each side to haul it taut on occasion. Vessels were frequently chased into the Tyne by the enemy's cruisers or privateers; once, five hundred Schaeveningen fishing-boats found refuge there. The boom of hostile guns was no unusual sound to a Tynesider's ears; the inhabitants of Shields would often hasten down, or rather up, to the 'Banks' to watch a desperate sea-fight, or to follow the frigate 'under tremendous press of sail, mark down some unlucky foreign cruiser.'

Such was Shields at the beginning of the present century. Like other seaports, it had its full share of the attentions of the press-gang, and that institution was as cordially hated here as elsewhere. Many were the fierce and sometimes bloody encounters between the pressgang and the infuriated citizens; now and then the former came badly off, especially at the hands of the ship-carpenters, a resolute and pugnacious body, who had constituted

themselves the special protectors of the harassed and persecuted Shields mariner. A tender or war-vessel was permanently stationed at Shields to receive the involuntary recruits for his majesty's service; some of these, however, managed to escape, either by cunning or by strategy. 'A sharp old South Shields "salt," on being impressed and taken on board the tender, ran up against the lieutenant on deck and instantly begged pardon—"he couldn't help it, he was so short-sighted." He was in consequence ordered over the ship's side and got off.' The lieutenant, apparently, was also short-sighted, else he would have seen through such a shallow artifice. Another man showed more daring and presence of mind. 'A smart young sailor sauntering one day along the "Banks" was seized by the chief of one of the gangs, who, pointing a pistol at his head, pressed him in the king's name. "I have a protection," said the sailor, putting his hand into the breast of his jacket. "Let me see it then," demanded the other. "Now, you thief," retorted Jack, as he drew out a pistol and pushed the muzzle of it into the face of his discomfited captor, who was thus obliged to relinquish his prize.' Thomas Haswell's father, a Shields seaman, had in his time the misfortune to be pressed into the frigate *Lizard*. While off the coast of Ireland, he and another pressed man determined to escape by swimming to the shore, close to which the frigate at the time was anchored. On the first dark night, when the sentry's back was turned, they slipped into the sea from the port side and swam silently off. They swam on and on, but no land was reached; at last, hopeless and utterly exhausted, they were compelled to turn, and with the utmost difficulty regained the ship, luckily getting on board unobserved. Nothing would induce Haswell to try the venture again, but his messmate made the attempt next night, and was never more heard of. The cause of their failure to reach the land was a simple one, perfectly well known, but in the excitement of attempted escape, had been entirely overlooked. The ship swung with the ebb and flood, and therefore presented opposite sides to the land at each change. Just at that time the port side was next the land during the day, but at night the starboard occupied that position; they had, consequently, been swimming *out to sea*, and thus, no doubt, the unfortunate man who went off alone on the second night perished.

It was in the midst of this war, tumult, and riot, that the first free school was founded, at the instance of a few enlightened citizens of Shields, who thought this a better way of celebrating King George's jubilee, than by spending the money collected for that purpose in fireworks. But 'eddicashin' was in those days looked upon by many as a thing not to be countenanced in any degree whatsoever. As a Shields shipowner indignantly exclaimed, 'Eddicashin! eddicashin? Noa! we'll syun hev nec sarvints!' Another weighty argument against education, especially in a place like

Shields, whose seafaring inhabitants at that time had more risks to encounter than they were subjected to by the elements, was

For mickle waste he counteth it would be
To stock a head with bookish wares at all,
Only to be knocked off by ruthless cannon-ball.

The Royal Jubilee School was opened in 1811, but, owing to the almost universal objection to educating the masses, the learning which the trustees thus freely offered was so hedged in by restrictions that it was very poor plant indeed. Spelling, the Bible, and Watts's Hymns were about the only things taught, for the trustees, as the only means of surmounting opposition, availed themselves literally of good King George's desire that every poor child in the kingdom should be able to read his Bible.

After the Peace, Shields quietened down, and in the course of years was enlivened by few noteworthy events. The town grew, and spread over the 'Banks;' shipbuilding and the coal trade flourished, and the Low Street, in face of desperate opposition, was stormed by the sanitarians. But it was the beginning of the forties before the railway penetrated to Tyne-side. Being thus cut off from the outer world, old customs and old traditions lingered long. The French feud was not yet forgotten, and a visible remembrance was the number of old cannon, which perchance in their day had breathed death and defiance against the enemy from the decks of doughty Tyne colliers, but which now, stuck muzzle downwards in the ground, served as convenient boundary marks or mooring posts. There were certain occurrences, however, all too frequent, which never lost their vital import to the wives and mothers of Shields, whose husbands or sons manned the fleet of colliers and other craft belonging to the Tyne. These were the North Sea gales. During winter, especially, a sudden north-east or south-east gale would strew the iron-bound coasts with the wrecks of unfortunate vessels caught on the lee-shore, or in a futile effort to seek the shelter of the Tyne.

Such scenes, as before remarked, were and are to some extent still to be witnessed, even in this age of steam. At the height of a gale the lifeboat may be of no use, and the ship goes to destruction. And in the Jubilee School, when the 'Maister' would call the roll next morning, Dixon, or Boyce, or little Thomson, will be returned absent, and some small shrill voice will utter the quite familiar explanation, 'Please, sir, his father's drooned.'

For in the year 1839, and in his thirty-second year, Thomas Haswell had returned as master to the school in which he had received the elements of his education. The general system of education at this time 'was dull, monotonous, and stereotyped, lacking every element of vitality. The lesson-books were written by persons devoid of capacity for (to say nothing of experience of) teaching; many were couched in a tone of ponderous priggishness and turgid self-satisfaction wholly detestable to any healthy mind.' It may readily be supposed that there was no sort of attraction here for the average boy, and especially for the untamed boy of Shields: Mr Haswell saw

that something besides this kind of 'education' was required, and he gradually established a system of his own; he, in fact, anticipated by more than a generation, modern methods of education. But he had many and great difficulties to contend with, for, the school being kept afloat by voluntary subscriptions which did little more than meet current expenses, there was no money to spare for innovations or 'crazes;' and all that he did was by his own contrivance or at his own cost. The first 'craze,' introduced in his first year, was vocal music, which was a tremendous success, and gave the boys a new interest in school. His next innovation was maps, but, being unable to buy them, he painted, in gigantic proportions, the two terrestrial hemispheres on the wall. This gave the lads a living interest in geography, and the subject became a favourite one with them. 'For years the Jubilee lads were recognised, and feared, by Shields skippers, as tartars at geographical cross-examination.' Astronomy next was introduced; astronomy led to geometrical drawing, but Mr Haswell had to manufacture his own instruments. Free-hand drawing, on black-boards and slates, had by this time established itself. Reading the newspapers, for the advanced boys, was early introduced. 'The "Maister" perceived the inestimable advantages to be derived from the systematic use of the newspaper as a source of fluent idiomatic English.' As time went on, Mr Haswell introduced new scientific subjects, and even drill and gymnastics, as soon as he could procure the necessary apparatus. The success of these experiments in education was speedily apparent. In a very few years the number of scholars increased from forty (the number when Mr Haswell became master) to two hundred. There was no more playing truant; the boys were as anxious to attend school as parents were to have their children admitted.

Affairs were thus progressing most favourably for master and scholars, and to the great satisfaction of the trustees, when the passing of the Education Act in 1870 brought matters to a sudden crisis. Some of the subscribers refused to continue their subscriptions to the up-keep of the school, on the ground that they could not both pay taxes and give voluntary subscriptions for the same object. This compelled the trustees, if collapse was to be averted, to put the school under Government inspection in order to secure the Government grant. There was no help for it, and Mr Haswell had the humiliation of having to undergo an examination, after being for thirty years a successful master, as to his fitness to conduct a school! He passed. But the golden days were over. For now commenced a system of 'narrowing down,' and amazing schemes and codes were invented, which at first harassed the 'Maister,' and eventually disheartened him. In 1880 the Jubilee School was turned over to the Tyne-mouth school board, and in 1886, the 'Maister,' in his eightieth year, and the forty-ninth of his mastership, laid down the reins, to pass the short remainder of his days in well-earned rest. He died in 1889; no man in Shields more respected or regretted, by high or low,

rich or poor, than he. The ruling passion was strong in death, and the closing formula of each day's work was the closing words of his life, 'Slates away, boys!'

WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO FIGHT A DUEL.

By C. J. CUTCLIFFE HYNÉ.

I.

THOUGH I am perhaps the least quarrelsome man in the world, it has been my fate to fight no less than two duels. One I confess to have sought; the other was thrust upon me: both occurred during the nineties of this nineteenth century. In each I received some bodily hurt.

The first of my duels took place in a small town of southern France. I was a resident there for the winter, had a tiny bachelor villa, and (through former acquaintance with the place) was on pretty intimate terms with a good many of my neighbours. There was an English element in the place, but the French of course predominated, and it was with the Frenchmen I usually found myself. The man with whom I fought was a *Provençal*, born close by.

He was a big, straggling fellow, lean, and with a bright bird's eye that was always glittering on you. He was a gentleman undoubtedly, had been educated in Marseilles, and had never wandered fifty miles from the Riviera coast. He was probably the most narrow-minded man that ever lived, and, on a diet of books and Anglo-phobe newspapers, he had imbibed a blind and poisonous hatred for the British nation that was unique in its completeness. His name was D'Arblay, and he called himself my friend.

That was the funny thing about the man. He cultivated the society of Englishmen, and individually (I think) he liked them. He was eternally running down *perfidé Albion*, but nobody took much notice of that. The Englishman who lives abroad is so entirely confident about the superiority of his own Island that he doesn't often break out in the patriotic vein. It isn't his way. Besides, he finds that one short pitying smile often serves his purpose better than a whole volume of talk.

Now for two years I had endured D'Arblay's revilings of my native land with no more forcible retort than a series of these pitying smiles; and I think in the end he began to hate me, for one day, without warning, he started on a fresh topic which he must have known was calculated to wound me deeply. He commenced to talk mild evil about some one I cared for very much indeed, and that in a club-house before the ordinary mixed gathering of other men.

I warned him once, twice, and a third time; and he always said he meant no harm, and turned off what I had said with easy badinage, and continued his theme. But at last I saw, or thought I saw, his motive, and a hot anger boiled up in me.

'D'Arblay,' I said, 'if you want to fight, say

so like a man. But drop talking about that girl, or I shall throw this inkstand at your head.'

'M'sieu,' he retorted, 'I dispute your right to be the censor of my conversation. The lady in question'—

I threw the inkstand.

The glass missed him, but the black fluid spirted over his face, and the technical insult had been given and received.

He bowed formally and left the club-house. I spoke to a couple of my friends and followed his example. Later, he appointed two seconds, and they consulted with mine; and a time was fixed for the meeting, and swords were chosen as the weapons.

D'Arblay was an average swordsman. I had seen him practise with a *maître d'escrime*, and had gauged his powers pretty well. For myself I knew of the art of fencing absolutely nothing whatever; and when everything was snugly arranged for the duel, I thought of this fact with something more than annoyance. I particularly did not want to be killed, because—well, because a certain lady had promised to marry me within a short time, and I—well, I did not want to disappoint her. And there was no backing out of the duel. One could afford to laugh at such a meeting in England. But in France it is another matter. Even the English winter residents would have looked askance at me if I had tried to disentangle myself. Moreover, there was another thing, more dangerous than wounds or death, and that was ridicule. A man may put up with being killed, but he cannot endure being laughed at. So I made up my mind that if D'Arblay did not disable me first, I would leave my mark on him in a way there was no mistaking. Mind I did not want to kill the fellow, only I did not intend to be mixed up in an affair which the newspapers could define as 'Another bloodless encounter,' and dismiss with a jeering paragraph.

So to sum up: I went on the field determined on forcing a serious fight, and a good deal fearing lest I myself should be the one to suffer.

We drove out to the place of meeting in the early morning, with a keen mistral blowing which chilled one to the bone. The others arrived simultaneously. There was quite a congregation of us: four seconds, two doctors, and the principals. But D'Arblay, being a Frenchman, liked a crowd, and I had to bow to the etiquette of the country whether I fancied it or not.

No politeness could have been more punctilious than ours, and none more icy. We two principals stripped to shirt and trousers, and I stood on the frost-rimed grass in my stocking feet. D'Arblay was opposite me, smiling grimly. We saluted one another with the bare glittering rapiers, and a second took up position behind each of us, standing ready with a walking-stick to knock up the blades at the least sign of a foul stroke. At least so I was warned. To myself I was wondering what a 'foul stroke' might be, so ignorant was I of the very elements of fencing. But I said nothing about this, and when D'Arblay crossed blades

with mine, I engaged him with whirling fury.

The blue steel flashed and stabbed a thousand circles in the chill morning air, and a pang of fear gripped me by the heart. I seemed to feel his blade passing through me in a hundred places. Death appeared inevitable. Every second I marvelled at finding myself alive.

To myself I accepted a mortal wound as inevitable; but I lusted to get my own blade through D'Arblay's body before I was killed. I could hardly see him. Our panting breath hung gray under the cold morning sun, so that we fought in a clammy mist. I lunged and *passadoed*; barely guarding at all; fighting on the offensive only, through sheer greed of getting in my own blow before I was *hors de combat*.

Then, before I knew what was happening, the duel ended. I was conscious of a feeling somewhere or other of a sear as with a hot iron. I understood that it meant I was wounded, and dully wondered where, though without being able to locate the hurt. I saw the walking-sticks of the seconds up-rise to beat down our weapons, and at the same moment I heard D'Arblay utter a shriek of pain. A heavy cane clashed down on my blade, and I drew back nearly burst for want of breath. These things take long to tell, but the whole of them had happened simultaneously—within one tick of a clock.

The surgeons rushed up to us with lint and bandages. Blood was running from my fingers on to the rapier's hilt. D'Arblay had scored my right fore-arm with a shallow gash a dozen inches long. He himself was in a worse case: I had run him through the shoulder.

My seconds tried to hold me back, but I was too warmed up to care much for the etiquette of the French duello then. I strode across to where D'Arblay lay in the surgeon's hands, with the blood pattering from my fingers on to the grass.

'M'sieu will apologise, I hope? I may mention that the lady is engaged to me.'

'I didn't know it,' said my opponent. 'Why didn't you tell me before? My dear fellow, I am most abominably sorry for having chattered. You have given me a pig of a stab, and that ought to settle accounts between us. Will you come and breakfast with me when we're both tied up?'

One of the seconds murmured at this informality.

'Sir,' I said, 'if you have anything to complain of, may I hear it?'

'Monsieur,' he replied, 'I think we had better consider this affair as ended now.'

II.

The other duel in which I took part was none of my seeking. It happened last year in Florida, where my wife and I were spending the winter, and was thrust upon me in a manner little short of murderous.

The beginning was in this wise: I detected a man cheating at cards. I was not playing myself, but the cheating was done to swindle a fellow who was my friend; and because I

saw it, beyond shadow of doubt, I called out to him to stop play. Of course there was a row, and (if the sharper had not been in a minority of one) there might well have been shooting, after the custom of the country. But as it was, the thing was utterly flagrant; indeed, the man himself did not attempt to deny it; and he went away scattering nothing more dangerous than venomous wordy threats. We were left triumphant possessors of the field, and I waxed pedantic to my friend over the danger of playing games of chance for coin of the realm with casual hotel acquaintances. Three days later I went off into the Everglades alligator shooting, and for deer also, if I could come across any.

Now what the sport was like will not be spoken of here in detail. Sufficient to mention that amongst other things I came upon an orchid which I imagined to be new, and all thoughts of shooting were for the time submerged beneath the ardour of the collector. I laid down my rifle (a Remington '400) against the stem of a magnolia tree, and began to feast my eyes upon the trails of hanging blossom.

I suppose I must have dawdled there a full hour, sketching, measuring, taking notes, culling specimens, when of a sudden something went *wisp* past the top of my head, and then close to, sounded the noisy crack of a heavy rifle. By a sort of useless instinct, the first thing I did was to start backwards and to duck my head; the next, to stare wildly round me. A glance showed beyond question where the bullet had come from. Down a glade of live-oaks, not sixty yards away, a man was busily engaged in slipping a fresh cartridge into the breech of a rifle, which had gray smoke-wreaths still crawling slowly from its muzzle. It was the fellow I had exposed for cheating at cards.

As I gazed, he finished loading, and sharply raised his weapon. I turned and ran like a frightened dog, zigzagging in my course to confuse his aim, and making for the magnolia tree. There I snatched up my own rifle, and darted behind the trunk.

I stopped and listened. Not a sound was to be heard which rose above the warm hum of the insects and the other never-ceasing noises of the forest. I could not doubt but that the man was watching me and waiting for his next opportunity to pick me off. My gorge rose at the thought of him. Brute! If he could fire a sitting shot at an unsuspecting man, I knew what I had to expect, and what I must do, if my own life was to be saved. I had got to depend on myself alone. In that solitude the next human creature might be twenty miles away.

Thud!

A bullet had struck the tree, and the noise of the shot came close upon its heels. I swung out from behind the trunk and lifted my rifle, when another shot whistled out from beneath the live-oaks, and I was poorer by the loss of an ear-lobe. My own bullet rattled harmlessly amongst the tree-twigs, and I strode back to shelter raging and bleeding.

The passion of murder burned in me then like

a torch. The heat of the day seemed to have passed completely away. The perspiration which stood on my body turned cool as an ice-douche. Never before had my thoughts gushed up with such clearness and strength. It was a duel to the death between me and the sharper, and he had drawn first blood, and I had got to win.

The words seemed floating in the hot air before me—'Kill! kill! kill!'

I had reloaded the Remington, and stood with ears strained to catch the slightest sound which told of my enemy's moving. Till that moment I had supposed that his rifle was a repeater. Now another idea came to me. There had been two reports; one short and sharp, the other heavier, and more noisy. Of course, the thing was clear. He had fired a revolver shot first, to draw me from my cover; had dropped the smaller weapon the moment he pulled trigger; and had fired on me with the rifle directly I emerged from cover. The fiendish cunning of the man made my hate for him glow in me like a draught of raw spirit.

All idea of fairness (if indeed such had ever occurred to me) was completely swept away by that time. I would fight him by his own methods. The only question was one of means. As matters stood, I lay ensconced behind the stem of the magnolia, and if I stepped out of its shelter I should have to take his fire before I could get in my own. As a snap-shot I was very conscious of my own deficiencies; from observation I had gained a high estimate of his skill.

But a brain working at the pressure which mine was put to then, yields up unexpected fruits; and when the idea did at last come to me, I could have sung for very joy. But there was too much danger in it to increase the risks unnecessarily. I slung my rifle by its strap across my shoulder, and turned round and commenced to climb the magnolia.

The stem had been split by lightning, or I could not have got up without my hands being seen round the sides, and as it was, the climb to the first branch was desperately hard; but I had the strength of ten men in me then, and the silent wiliness of a Seminole; and I gained the cover of the foliage without having made a slip, or cracked a twig.

With the caution of a lynx I made my way up the ladder of branches, going higher and higher till there was barely one layer of the dark green shining leaves between me and the burning sky above; and then I looked about me till I found a steady seat; and then I unslung the Remington from my shoulders. I brushed the rustling curtain of leaves softly aside with the muzzle, and peered out. My enemy was on his old ground, standing beneath the live-oaks with his rifle at the ready. Some indefinable suspicion must have got hold of him, for at that moment he looked up.

The reports of the two rifles rang up into the heated air simultaneously—but—mine was the better aim. His bullet whistled through the dark green leaves a foot from my head: mine broke his right elbow-joint.

I reloaded and hailed him. There was a pool of black water on the nearer side of the live-oaks, and the snout and eyebrows of an

alligator showed upon the surface like two knots of dead-wood.

'Take your rifle,' I said, 'and that revolver, and throw them into the water.'

He hesitated, nursing his wounded arm in the palm of the other, and glaring at me like a fiend.

'Quick!' I said. 'If you take time to think twice more, I'll shoot you dead.'

He picked up the weapons one by one, and then dropped them into the water with sullen splashes. The reptile in the pool, frightened by the noise, sank down to the mud below, where they lay.

'Now,' I said, 'go!' and he went, and I watched till he was out of sight amongst the tree-trunks and the saw-grass.

Then I climbed down, and gathered my orchids, and went home by another way, keeping a very sharp lookout. I trusted little to that man's chivalry.

I have seen another fellow cheat at cards since then, but that was in South America, and I did not feel called upon to interfere. Two duels have been quite enough for me.

KAURI GUM.

PROBABLY not very many of our readers have heard of kauri gum. It is a kind of fossil resin, the product of the giant kauri, a tree only to be found in the extreme north of New Zealand, and which at the present rate at which it is being destroyed, will probably soon be extinct. The gum is found in the ground, in lumps from the size of a pea to that of a man's head, or even larger. Its principal use is for making varnish, a great deal of it being shipped for this purpose to Europe and the United States. The extraction of the gum from its native soil gives occupation to many thousands in New Zealand who would otherwise be reckoned among the unemployed. To start as a gum-digger no great capital is required, nor is any experience necessary. A spade, a tent, some few utensils, and a fortnight's rations are all that is necessary, and these can often be obtained on credit from the local shopkeepers. Some diggers use a spear for piercing the ground to ascertain the presence of gum. If the spear, in its course through the ground, encounters any obstacle, the experienced digger can tell from the feel whether the object so struck is gum, and can distinguish it from a stone, root, or any other obstacle. Equipped only with his spade, and a bag on his back to hold the gum which he may find, the digger sets out in the early morning, and returns at night with a quantity of gum which may vary from fifty-one to two hundred and one pounds, or more; one hundred and one pounds a day is considered a good average.

The average earnings of the digger may be twenty or twenty-five shillings; some gain more, and many gain less. In this, as in every other business, of course, the most experienced are the most successful. The life is a hard one, and, as a general rule, none but those who have

been used to hard work make a success of it. Yet it is a life that for many is not without its charms. To a person of a roving disposition it presents many attractions, not the least of which is, that the digger is his own master. He works when he likes, and leaves off when he likes. Whenever he feels inclined for a holiday, he takes it, and there is no one to say him nay. Among the diggers are to be found all classes of men. Many of them are educated, and some formerly occupied a good position in society. On more than one occasion we have seen men born to a title working on the gum-fields. In every camp of gum-diggers, professional men are to be found, many of whom have had a university education. As a rule, the gum-diggers are an orderly and law-abiding population. The professional criminal seems to avoid the gum-camps; perhaps the work is too hard, and the excitements too few for him. I have known many people who lived in close vicinity to the gum-fields, and although it was not the custom to lock any of the doors at night, nothing was ever missed.

The gum-fields are an invaluable resource to New Zealand, for so long as they last, there need be no cry from the unemployed. Any able-bodied man can make a living on them, if nothing more. The life of the digger is a monotonous one in many respects. As a rule, the gum-fields are situated in somewhat inaccessible localities, those nearer to the towns having long since been worked out. He has no society beyond that of his mates, and may go for months without seeing a newspaper, which the average New Zealander accounts no small hardship. On the other hand, he is safe from the temptations of the city, and it is seldom that the dram-shop is near enough to secure his daily custom.

He sees few new faces, unless it be the messenger sent out weekly or monthly by the nearest shopkeeper who supplies him with rations. The digger, be it noted, is extremely particular as to the quality of his supplies; nothing but the very best will suit him. Cocoa is much used on the fields, but none but the best brands find any sale there; the same applies to all other articles of food.

On Sunday the digger is generally kept busy cutting firewood for the week, washing clothes or repairing them, and sundry other jobs. He may also employ his spare time scraping the gum so as to fit it for the market; this is generally done in rainy weather, when outdoor employment is impossible. And here it may be noted that the gum-fields of New Zealand are among the rainiest places on earth. The writer spent more than a month on them, and there was not a day (of twenty-four hours) in which rain did not fall, and about two days out of every week were such as to preclude the idea of work.

We would not advise any one to go out to New Zealand with the express intention of turning gum-digger. Besides the hardship of the life (which, however, may have its attractions to a young man so long as the novelty lasts), the gum-digger is universally looked down on and despised by every other class of colonist. New Zealand as a country is democratic enough,

more so, perhaps, than any other country on earth, and labour is not held in contempt as in England. Every man is considered as good as another so long as he gains his living honestly. Perhaps the only exception is in the case of the gum-digger. 'He is only a gum-digger,' you will hear a colonist say, and this is intended to stamp the man referred to as an outcast.

Of late years a number of Austrian labourers have emigrated to New Zealand with the express intention of taking to gum-digging, and have thereby incurred the hearty dislike of all professional diggers. These Austrians are notorious on account of their laborious and thrifty habits, their only fault in the eyes of the colonists. A man who can live on sixpence a day is not a fair competitor in their opinion, and the Austrians are boycotted accordingly.

The gum-fields are rapidly becoming exhausted, and in a few years more the gum-digger will be as extinct as the dodo. Even now the size of the pieces of gum to be obtained is becoming smaller every year, and the digger is glad to pick up fragments of gum now, which in the earlier days he would have passed over with contempt, as not worth the trouble of lifting. The fields have also been dug and re-dug, until in most parts it is impossible to find a patch of ground the size of an ordinary room (unless it happens to be an absolutely barren patch) which has not already been turned over; and the best results are now being obtained by digging under the former workings, which entails a great deal of labour. Notwithstanding these facts, the number of diggers increases every year, though most competent authorities consider that the gum deposits, at the present rate of working, cannot last another thirty years, and they will probably cease to be remunerative before this time. The competition of other gums, such as Manila gum, also threatens the product of the kauri.

RESURRECTION.

I WRAPPED around me tight a cloak of scorn;
'Thou fool! Believe no more,' I, mocking, said,
Dragging my weary feet o'er paths forlorn,
Not heeding how they bled.

For I had trusted, therein there lay the smart,
Had trusted one who, smiling, did me wrong,
Entering the singing places of my heart
To silence all its song.

Not all earth's loveliness bade me rejoice,
Life's fairest flower lay stained with disgrace;
And, when I heard the music of Love's voice,
I turned away my face.

Yet this May morn she comes, as oft of yore,
And, lo, from my dark soul a veil is rent;
She lays my tired head on her breast once more,
And speaks her old content.

MARY DANIEL.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 641.—VOL. XIII.

SATURDAY, APRIL 11, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

THE ELECTRIC SUPPLY OF LONDON.

It has often been remarked how little the citizens of a great city know of the immense undertakings and of the capital and labour involved in order to supply them with the necessities and luxuries of life, the constant enjoyment of which has caused them to be looked upon as commonplace. Of the citizens of Greater London how few have any adequate idea of what is required to afford and maintain for them the regular supply of gas and water which they now enjoy! And how few have any knowledge at all of less obvious supplies—for example, of the miles of pipes under our streets which convey, from the pumping station at Wapping, water at a very high pressure, by means of which some 3400 horse-power is available for operating the hydraulic lifts in our large warehouses, hotels, and elsewhere?

Even *savants* are ignorant of the nature of electricity, and therefore term it an 'imponderable fluid,' whilst the more modern among them prefer the simple (!) phrase 'a vibration of the ether.' Hence it is not surprising that erroneous notions are rife as to the supply of electricity, the more so as the generating stations, where the 'electric current' is produced, are generally built in some out-of-the-way spot. Consequently, they are seldom seen by the man in the street, and he will no doubt be surprised when he is informed of large generating stations being dotted about all over the city and suburbs.

The first station for the public supply of the electric current was opened as recently as the year 1885, and was situated in the basement of the Grosvenor Gallery. The company—now known as the London Electric Supply Corporation—which began the supply there, has been supplying current continuously ever since, except during a short interruption caused by a disastrous fire at its station.

Ten years have elapsed, and now in London itself there are some fourteen companies or

local authorities, each with one or more generating stations in its respective district. They control an almost incredible number of miles of wire and cable laid underneath our streets, upon which they have actually expended the large sum of over *four and a quarter millions sterling*. Of this sum the City of London Company is alone responsible for £1,100,000, and the London Electric Supply Corporation, which has now a huge station at Deptford, has spent about £900,000; the former company supplying the E.C. district, and the latter the S.E. and Westminster districts. The number of lamps connected to the mains of these companies had reached at the end of the past year the equivalent of nearly 1,200,000, each of eight candle power—a number which is exclusive of the many arc lamps. The revenue therefrom cannot be much less than £535,000 per annum.

Eight of the undertakings supply what is known as a low tension direct or continuous current at a pressure of 100 to 110 volts on the consumers' lamps. In this system the lamps are connected direct through the street mains to the generating station where the dynamos generate at a slightly higher pressure. Recently, however, two important companies—the St James and Pall Mall, and the Charing Cross and Strand—have inaugurated a new method in connection with the direct current supply. They now generate a portion of the current they supply at a much higher pressure and transmit it to suitably located sub-stations where the pressure, by means of 'motor generators' or 'rotary transformers,' is reduced to the standard 100 to 110 volts at which it is distributed to the consumers. By this means the amount of copper in the mains is considerably reduced, and the interest on the capital expended on mains forms a not unimportant item in the total cost of the current supplied. It is chiefly for this reason that the remaining six stations generate what is termed a high-pressure alternating current, five generating at a pressure

of about 2000 volts, which, at sub-stations, is reduced to low pressure by passing it through 'alternate current transformers.' The London Electric Supply Corporation, however, with the same object, among others, generate at the extra high pressure of 10,000 to 11,000 volts at Deptford, and this alternating current is 'transformed down' in two stages before it reaches the consumer.

Coming now to the question of cost, the statement that the price of electrical energy to the consumer varies from fourpence to sixpence per Board of Trade Unit, conveys no definite idea to the non-technical reader. But perhaps it will be made clearer by the two following illustrations: One Board of Trade Unit will (1) supply a sixteen candle power lamp for about sixteen and a half hours; or (2), if used for running an electric motor, it will develop about one and a quarter horse-power for one hour. The charge for the current for power purposes is usually less than for lighting, owing to the power in general being required during those hours in which the lamps are not being used. It is naturally the dream of the generating-station engineer to obtain a good 'day load,' so that his expensive machinery and mains may be earning revenue for a longer period than the few brief hours of lighting, especially as an increased 'day load' entails no extra staff.

Compared with other large towns, London is easily at the head for the magnitude of its electrical supply. Paris, for instance, has only an equivalent of about 500,000 eight candle power lamps as compared with the 1,200,000 lamps in London as stated above. Manchester and Liverpool have respectively about 92,000 and 54,000; Glasgow, 70,000; Edinburgh, 43,000; Dublin, 16,000; and Cardiff, 9000. Of the total capital expended in the whole of the United Kingdom for supplying electricity, London has spent more than one-half.

This industry is developing at a very rapid rate—a kind of statement often thoughtlessly made, but in this case true nevertheless. New undertakings are springing up all over the country, and old undertakings are everywhere extending their plant. Of rapid extension a most extraordinary instance has occurred at Edinburgh. The station there, although it has been supplying current for not quite a year, has been compelled to order new machinery, so as to nearly double the present plant, already overloaded.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

CHAPTER XIII.—DISSOLUTION.

It came the very next morning—the day after this lovers' quarrel. The thing happened which Robert had been expecting so long. You all remember how everybody said it was coming—coming—coming. And it came not. The Government, with its narrow majority, still hung on; it still discussed and passed bills. All the papers on one side declared

that the dissolution must come: they said it must come in a month—a week—the day after to-morrow at latest. How could a Cabinet go on with their absurd little majority? But still the Government continued. Then—lo! The thing came—and it seemed to burst upon the world as quite an unexpected thing. We received it as if we had had no idea of its possibility.

Robert took his paper, like most of us, as a part of his breakfast. This morning he opened it with less eagerness than usual, because his mind was disturbed by that little rebellion in the study. He was uncertain, I believe, how to comport himself with the culprit, who now sat opposite him with looks still mutinous. But the thing that he read in the forefront of the paper drove all other thoughts out of his head. And so far as concerned Isabel, they never came back again, as you shall hear if you have patience. There it was, in big letters, 'DISSOLUTION.'

He read the announcement, and the lines that followed, first swiftly, as one always reads things that are surprising. The plain, bald intelligence of an event can be mastered in a moment. The bearings, and meanings, and possibilities, and certainties, and doubtfulnesses of the event take a second and a third reading for fuller comprehension. It is a strange power, that of reading a whole column of news in one glance down a column. We all have it in moments of excitement. The first time, then, that Robert read the news he grasped it all at that one glance; the second time and the third time he read it more slowly, turning over in his mind at the same moment the possible relation of the dissolution of Parliament to himself.

Then he laid down the paper, and gazed across the table at Isabel, who was still under the terror of yesterday, and feared new developments. There was, however, no cause for any such anxiety.

'It has come,' he said solemnly. And then she knew that she was safe for that time, because she divined what had happened.

'What has come?' asked the Captain, astonished, looking up from his plate of bacon.

'What I have been looking for, what is going to make my fortune—the general election has come. That's all. Only the general election! At last!' he sighed. Then he threw the paper across the table. 'You can have it,' he said. 'Any one can have it. There's no more news in it so far as I care. The dissolution of Parliament! That's news enough for me. Quite enough.'

He swallowed his tea and retreated to his own den without more words.

'Oh!' said the Captain thoughtfully, 'it's a general election, is it? Then they'll have an election at Shadwell, I suppose. Ah! And Robert will get in. They all tell me he'll get in. And they say he'll work wonders when he does get in. Very likely. I don't know much about these things, Isabel, but I've lived for sixty-five years, and they've been looking for wonders all the time, it seems to me. When I used to come home—which was once in five years or so—I used to say, "Well, what

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are you doing?" "Looking for wonders." That's what they always said, or words to that effect. And the wonders never came, and, what was more wonderful, we got on quite as well without them. One after the other I remember them all. There was Palmerston and Johnny Russell, and John Bright, and Gladstone, and Bradlaugh, and Balfour—but the wonders never came. Next it's going to be Burnikel, if he's lucky and can make 'em believe in him. Well, well. Burnikel will bring the Wonders. Robert's as good as any of 'em. You'll see. Give me some more tea, my dear.'

'Since Robert wants to get into the House, I hope he will. I don't understand why he should want it.'

'I hope so too. Because you see, Isabel, since we are alone—it's a delicate subject to talk about—but as I say, since we are alone'—the Captain approached the subject with some difficulty—'we may talk a bit about what we can't talk about very well either with George or Robert.'

'What is it, father?'

'Well, my dear, it's about this engagement of yours. I confess I don't like the way it's going on. There! Four years is a terrible long time for a young man to wait. It isn't natural for a young man to wait so long. Do you suppose I would have waited four years?' The Captain laughed. 'Four days was nearer the mark. Isabel, do you suppose there's—there's some one else—up the back stairs—some other girl—another wife in another port?'

'If Robert was in love with some other girl he would very soon make an end of his engagement,' said Isabel.

The Captain shook his head dubiously, as one loaded with sad experiences, but refrained from pursuing that branch of the subject.

'To be sure,' he went on. 'Robert's a bookish man; he reads a good deal, reads something every day. It's the only use many of them get of their eyes. But even the readingest of young fellows can't be always thinking about his books. Then he speechifies a good deal—makes 'em up, learns 'em, and fires 'em off; but a young fellow can't be always thinking about his speechifying. Mostly the young fellows of the present day are like those of my day. They are fond of a song and glass, and they like to shake a leg now and again, and to kiss a pretty woman.'

'Robert is not one of that kind. He never wants either a song or a glass. And as for shaking—oh!'

'But to wait for four years—four long years! To go on waiting as if he liked it! It sticks in the gizzard, my dear.'

'It was to come off, he told me, when he had done something or other. The election, I expect, was what he meant.'

The Captain took up the paper again and read the leading article in the paper twice over, slowly.

'There is no doubt, I suppose,' he said, 'though the papers do reel off lies every day, that they have got the right end of the stick this time. There will be a general election, and Robert will get in and'—

'Father, do you suppose he really meant the election?'

'What more could he mean? And, as I said before, no man likes to go on being engaged for ever. Wedding bells will be ringing, Isabel. Wedding bells, my dear.'

She rose and fled.

When I arrived at ten o'clock, Robert was still in his study, pacing the room in uncontrollable agitation. 'The time has come,' he cried. 'It has come. My chance has come. I feel as if it was my only chance.'

'All right. You shall get in. I know nothing whatever about the matter, because I never assisted at an election before; but here I am; take me; take all my time; I will live here if you like; I will look after the yard for you. I have heard of Nottingham lambs being wanted. I will become a lamb. Platforms are sometimes rushed and candidates hustled off. I will get up a stalwart party of hustlers if you like. Candidates are heckled out of their five senses. I will become a heckler of the most venomous kind for your opponents. I can't write epigrams and verses, because that part of my education has been neglected. But here I am, Robert—one man, at least, at your service.'

'Thanks, a thousand times. You shall join my committee to begin with. I must make haste to get my committee together; they shall all be working-men except you. I must sit down to prepare an address. I shall have to arrange for an address somewhere or other every night till polling day. It's going to be a splendid time—a magnificent time. By —!' He swore a great oath, for the first time in his life. 'My chance has come—my chance has come!'

His voice softened; he sank into his chair and leaned his head upon his hand. Robert was, for the moment, overcome. The spectacle of this emotion pleased me. I suppose no one likes to think of another as altogether composed of cast iron. When any ordinary human being sees the thing for which all his life long he has worked and longed, actually within his reach, that ordinary or average human being is generally a little overcome. Remember that in this case ambition had devoured nearly all other passions. The man had had no youth; none of the delightful freaks, fredaines, and frolics of youth could be recorded of this young man; the unfortunate Robert had never kissed a girl to his subsequent confusion; nor scoured the streets; nor painted Wapping red; nor passed his midnights over cups; he had worked and trained himself for this end and none other. He would have been more than human had he shown no sense of the crisis or juncture of events.

While he sat there, head in hand, Isabel stole in softly like a ghost, and stood beside his chair. I made as if I would go, but she motioned me to stay. By the two red spots in her cheeks I was made aware that something decisive would be said.

He seemed not to observe her presence. She touched his shoulder. 'Robert!'

'Isabel!' he started, and sat up, with a quick frown of irritation.

'I have come to congratulate you, Robert,' she said timidly.

'Yes, thank you, Isabel. Thank you. Don't say any more.'

'When the general election is over, you will have done what you proposed to do, I suppose. I thought it would be years first. Your ambition, I mean, will be achieved.'

'Achieved? Why Isabel, you understand nothing. That is only a beginning.'

'Oh! Only a beginning?' She looked at first bewildered. Then a smile gleamed in her eyes. And then she sighed—no sigh of satisfaction.

'Only a beginning?' she repeated.

'Why, what else should it be? No one would want to be a member of Parliament only for the pride of it, I suppose.'

'Oh! I thought'—

'Look here, Isabel. I'm glad you came in. After the little misunderstanding of yesterday, it's as well to have a talk. You won't mind George: he knows all about it. Sit down there.' Such was the improvement in his manners that he actually got up and placed a chair for her. As for me, I retired to the seat in the window, not proposing to interrupt the conversation.

'I will just tell you exactly what is the meaning of the situation. I have told no one—no one except George, so far. I didn't tell you because you wouldn't understand. It isn't in your way to see. You've changed a bit since you took to going about with George'—there was not a touch of jealousy in his mind—'straightened yourself, and filled out and improved so, that I hardly know you any more. You're bigger than you were, Isabel—I like a woman to look strong—but still I don't think you can quite understand.'

'I suppose you want to do something great in the House of Commons?'

'Put it that way if you please. I will give you details and particulars.'

Isabel sat facing him. There was now no look of passion or admiration on his face. The hungry look had left his eyes, which, instead, were filled with the eagerness of the coming struggle. There was nothing to fear from him. Indeed at such a moment as this it is not of love that a man can be expected to think: he may most lawfully and laudably think of nothing but himself, even before Helen of Troy herself. But I thought, looking at the two of them, What a strange pair of lovers! The man who had never said a kind word: the girl who looked forward to her marriage with terror!

'Now, Isabel,' he said. 'I will tell you. I am going to enter the House as a plain Master Craftsman, not a gentleman, except that I know their tricks and phrases—I shall be a man experienced in industrial questions and in everything concerned with work practical and theoretical. They want such a man badly. I am going in as an Independent member, like John Bright. When I have made my mark in the House and am a power in it, as John Bright was, I shall perhaps join a party in order to enter the Cabinet. And not till then. And perhaps not at all. As for being one of the rank and file; saying what one is told to say; put up to defend the incompetence and the blundering of the commanders; calling the Irish members, for instance, all the names under the sun one day, and all the opposite names the

next day, just to catch votes; to be everything and all things for votes—votes—more votes—I won't do it. That kind of work will not do for me.'

'Well?' Either Isabel did not understand the point or else it had no interest for her. She looked unconcerned and spoke coldly.

'I told George at the outset: I called upon him on purpose to tell him when he was a stranger. And he fell in with it as soon as he saw that I meant business. At the first go off he thought I was a conceited windbag—one of the ignorant lot turned out by every local Parliament. I could see very well what he thought. When he saw that I was a determined kind of chap, he fell in with it, I say, and helped me all he could.'

'Yes?' Isabel showed no manner of interest in this revelation of political ambition.

'And thought about this and about that thing wanted. Oh, the essentials of the thing were all right—the knowledge and the appearance and the power of speech. But there was one thing wanting. I had never thought of such an omission, and without him I could never have repaired that omission. I'm not ashamed to say, not as things have gone, that what I wanted was manners.'

'Manners!' cried Isabel, showing interest at this point. 'You to want manners?'

'Just what I said myself. But George was right. There's a thousand little ways in which the fellows at the West End are different from us. They are mostly tricks invented to show that they are a superior race. I've learned these tricks, and now, I believe, I can pretend to be a gentleman.'

'You never were anything else.'

'There are gentlemen and gentlemen, Isabel. Have you noticed any change in me?'

'Well, Robert,' she replied timidly, 'I have thought that you were gentler.'

'Of course. One of the things is to repress yourself and pretend not to care. That's what you call being gentle.'

'Power is what you desire more than anything else in the world, Robert. You have always desired it.'

'Always. There is nothing in the world worth having compared with power, Isabel. I want to be a leader—nothing less than that. These are my ambitions. I understand now how it must seem to other people a wild and presumptuous dream, for a man in my position. I don't care a straw what it seems. I realise how great a thing it is, and I am just all the more confirmed in my resolution.'

'And when you are a leader?' It was quite impossible to make Isabel understand the audacity of this ambition. She thought that Robert would simply stand upon the floor of the House of Commons in order to receive the distinctions that would be showered upon him; that everybody would immediately begin to offer him posts of honour, because he was so strong and masterful a man.

'Well, one thing, Isabel. As soon as I am in the Cabinet—say Home Secretary—my first ambition will be achieved. Then as regards a certain promise'—

'How long,' she interrupted quickly, 'do

you think it will take before you arrive so far?'

'No one can say. A party gets turned out or keeps in. At the quickest time possible for a new man to work his way and be recognised, and put over the heads of other men, one can't very well expect such success in less than five years.'

'It can only be done in five years,' I interposed for the first time, 'under the most favourable circumstances possible—if the present Government gets returned again, if it stays in five years, if you meet with immediate success, if vacancies occur among the chiefs, if you are able to serve in some subordinate capacity. If I were you, Robert, I should say ten years.'

'Say ten years,' he replied cheerfully. 'A year or two is neither here nor there if a man is advancing all the time.'

'And a woman is waiting,' I added.

'Ten years,' said Isabel. 'But your side may get turned out.'

'They may. Then it might be longer. Of course if a man once becomes a power in the House, he becomes also a power in the country. His influence may go on increasing.'

'Ten years. That is a very long time. There will be many changes in ten years.'

'Changes? I daresay—I daresay. I hope so. I shall make some changes myself.'

'Changes in your own mind, Robert?'

He saw what she meant. 'I think not, Isabel. A promise is a promise. When my word is passed, the thing is as good as done.'

She got up. 'I won't waste your time any longer, Robert. I am glad to hear what your ambitions really mean. It was about that—promise—that I came to see you. I thought the time was come when you might want to fulfil that promise.'

'Not yet, Isabel.'

'Not yet. I came to set you free—if you wished to be set free.'

'To set me free?'

'Because a man like you should not be hampered by an engagement, especially with a woman whom—I mean—you ought to be free. So Robert, I do set you free—if you desire it.'

'What makes you think that I desire it, Isabel? I don't desire it.'

'That is because you don't know other women. So, Robert, it shall be always and at any time as you desire. We owe so much to you that this is due to you in return. I will wait for the fulfilment of that promise for ten years, twenty years, all my life—if you please. I will cheerfully set you free whenever you desire to be released. That is all, Robert.'

'Why,' said Robert, 'there spoke a good and reasonable girl. But you've given me quite as much in work as I've given you in board and lodging. You owe me nothing. As for being released, ask me if I want to be released when I am the Right Honourable Robert Burnikel, Secretary of State for India. And now let's make an end of thanksgivings and explainings, and get to business. There's lots of work before us.'

'Let me help you, Robert. My shorthand and typewriting ought to be of some use to you.'

'I wouldn't ask you, Isabel—but you can be of the greatest use. I take it very kindly of you after yesterday'—he held out his hand in token of forgiveness. Isabel accepted it, smiling graciously. 'I do, indeed, Isabel, after yesterday's little misunderstanding.' He held her hand and looked her straight in the face. And not one touch of softening in his eyes: not the slightest look of love.

Then Isabel took her old place as shorthand clerk, and Robert walked about his room dictating to her and talking to me. I understood for the first time how a man may come to regard a woman as a mere mechanical contrivance for working purposes. He spoke to Isabel, once more his clerk, as if she were a senseless log: he ordered her to write this—to write that. I think that I could never bring myself to forget the sex or the humanity of a girl clerk.

'My career is beginning,' said Robert, at eleven o'clock, after the first great speech had been delivered. 'It is beginning. Well, I am not afraid. I am not in the least afraid. The House of Commons is no more difficult to move than the music hall of Shadwell. There's only one way to move any class of hearers. You must first talk to interest them—that's grip. I've got the grip of a bulldog. Then you must talk to make 'em cry. I can make 'em cry.'

'If you make the House of Commons cry,' I said, 'they'll shove you up into the House of Lords as fast as they can.'

'And you must be able to make 'em laugh. I can make 'em laugh.'

'If you can make the House of Commons laugh, Robert, they'll never let you go up to the other House at all.'

SCRAP-IRON.

EVERY household has some pieces of scrap-iron which will sooner or later find their way to the furnaces and be again melted up. These may be old rusty locks, a child's broken hoop, a worn-out spade, and old fire-irons, once so well polished and highly cherished. What becomes of it all? Probably this material may be sold to the ragman, in the first place, for a mere trifle. He goes round from house to house getting rags and bones and old iron, in fact, anything that is marketable, until he has got his cart full. Then he makes his way to a scrap-iron yard, where he disposes of his iron for so much per hundredweight according to quality.

A scrap-iron yard is a curious place, where almost every conceivable article of iron finds its way. Iron spoons, kettles, frying-pans, tea-trays, locks, keys, horse-shoes, nails, nuts and bolts, hinges, window-frames, steam-boilers, and thousands of other things besides. About two years ago the scrap-yard with which I am connected had about twenty thousand bayonets, which were quite bright, lying in the yard at one time. They had been made at the time

of the Franco-German war; and had never been used, so they eventually found their way into the scrap-yard.

Roughly speaking, there are four classes of iron: (1) wrought iron; (2) cast iron; (3) malleable iron; (4) steel. Wrought iron is iron that can be beaten out on an anvil and welded; such as blacksmiths use. Cast iron cannot be beaten out, nor welded, for it is too brittle. It has to be poured into moulds whilst in a molten state, and cast into such articles as grates, fenders, pots, pulleys, &c. Malleable iron is different in its nature from either, for it may be poured into moulds like cast iron, but is not nearly so brittle, and comes, so to speak, between the two. It possesses something of the toughness of wrought iron, but cannot be hammered out. It has, however, this quality—it may be dropped on the floor, or even struck with a hammer, without breaking. We all know that if we were to drop a cast-iron pot, or strike it with a hammer, we might crack it and render it useless. Wrought iron may be hammered out, but cannot be run into a mould. Malleable iron, therefore, answers a very important purpose, and is used chiefly for small work. It is largely used for buckles for braces, handles for coffins, and nails for boots. The tips on the heels of boots, and Blakey's boot-protectors, are made out of this metal. If a boot-protector were made of cast iron, as soon as the shoemaker attempted to hammer it on to the boot, it would snap in two.

All the iron that is brought into the yard has to be carefully sorted by an experienced person, and each kind kept by itself. All the *wrought iron* has to be sent into the Black country, or wherever there are works which make that class of iron. The iron that is made from old wrought scrap is the very best, and is quoted on the market as 'marked bars.' There is no necessity for sending any *cast iron* out of any large manufacturing town, for there are innumerable places where castings of every description are made, and there is, generally speaking, comparatively little difficulty experienced in disposing of it.

Malleable iron is much more difficult to sell, and there are only a few dealers who will buy it. Steel, like wrought iron, has to be sent to the large iron and steel works to be manufactured over again. Considerable difficulty is experienced in disposing of steel, for it is made of so many different qualities, and for such different purposes, that very few firms care to take it. Those large firms that turn out a particular quality of steel do not care to purchase steel of a very different nature to what they themselves produce.

There are, of course, many other kinds of iron besides those enumerated which come into the yard, and which have to be dealt with. There is a great deal of *swarf* produced, which is of many different qualities, from half dirt up to good clean rough turnings from a

lathe. Then there is *galvanised iron*, such as buckets, coal-hods, and corrugated sheeting, used for roofing purposes, &c.; and also enamelled iron.

For marketable purposes, enamelled iron is entirely worthless, and galvanised iron is very little better. The proprietor of the yard sets such a small value on either, that he would not buy them at sixpence a cart-load. Still, some of this iron finds its way into every yard and has to be dealt with. It frequently happens that the ragman brings into the yard two or three buckets along with his other iron, and, if he gets the chance, will put these on the weighing-machine with the rest of his material. When the proprietor notices this, he either throws them off the machine, or orders the ragman to do so. After some considerable debate between the ragman and the proprietor, it usually ends with the ragman requesting that he may leave them in the yard, which the proprietor usually permits. This kind of material takes up much room and is very unprofitable. Every bit of galvanised iron has to be put into the fire, and all the coating must be burnt off. Then hollow iron has to be hammered flat, and, after it has been sent away, the price obtained is just about sufficient to cover the expenses incurred.

Enamelled iron is still more difficult to deal with, for the enamel cannot be burnt off. The only thing that can be done with it is to hammer it off the plate, and this never pays. Enamelled iron is, whenever detected, almost invariably sent back with the ragman, no matter how he may entreat to leave it behind. Some large plates are, however, saleable for roofing purposes. As a rule, short, small material is more valuable than long; for long and bulky iron has to be cut up before it can be sold; and of course all extra work means extra expense. Thus, a steam-boiler, after having been worked as long as it was safe to do so, is taken out and sold to some scrap dealer, who has it cut into plates before he can sell it to the ironworks. The expense incurred is so great that (at the present price of iron) a boiler intact is only worth a little more than half what it is when cut into plates.

It is surprising how many sets of iron bedsteads come in, and how they are disposed of. The prices they usually fetch are from eleven to fifteen pence, according to weight. Many of these sets are in a very good condition; in some cases only the casters are gone, and a lath or two broken, or sometimes a socket casting broken off. In many instances the housewife, on obtaining a superior set of bedsteads, sells the old ones to the ragman for a mere trifle. In the same way useful articles of various descriptions come into the yard. I know a couple of men who come regularly to the yard to look for any bargains in the bedstead line. There are a large variety in stock, sometimes as many as forty or fifty sets. They look among these and pick out some of the best sets, getting sides and laths to fit; these, when complete, cost from one and ninepence to half-a-crown, according to the weight.

They then paint them up and put them into a saleroom.

There are, however, comparatively few bedsteads sold in this way; by far the greater number being broken up, sorted, and sent to the ironworks. The laths are usually sold to men who come into the yard and purchase them for the purpose of cutting out small washers. There are many other useful things found in the yard, such as gas-piping, pulleys, lengths of shafting, broken vices, scales, &c. These are bought by men who call at the yard, and sometimes get good bargains. Two or three blacksmiths call frequently and pick out useful iron that they can work up; and, as they can buy this at reasonable rates, it pays them for their trouble.

A word now about the *ragmen* who bring the scrap-iron to the yard. They are a very ignorant, drunken, dissolute set, belonging to the very lowest grade of society; but they are cunning at a bargain, and disposed to quarrel over the merest trifle. Our weighing-machine is sufficiently large to weigh a wagon and load up to ten tons, and all the stuff that passes over the machine is weighed to seven pounds. The machine-house is a large one, and to satisfy those who bring the material, we invite them in to see it weighed. But, as a rule, they do not need an invitation; they come in on their own account, and I have known them, when I have been away for a few minutes, walk in and weigh the stuff for themselves.

On one occasion, I found two rough-looking customers in the place. Their cart was on the machine; they had weighed it and made it come to about eight and a quarter hundredweight. 'That's the weight,' I was told. However, I was not prepared to take their weight, although I saw that the beam was up, and seemed to indicate it correctly enough. As I ran the ball up and down the beam I was surprised to find that it was still up, and that somehow or other the machine was not acting properly. It was some time before I found out what was the matter; they had placed some old files in such a position under the hanger that, when the beam was pushed up, it could not come down again. Having cleared away this obstruction, I re-weighed the stuff, and found that it was two hundredweight less. These men usually run their cart on to the machine, and weigh it, *gross weight*, cart, bag, and anything else. After they have emptied their stuff out of the bag, if you are not watching them, they throw the bag on one side and do not have it weighed back, and then when they are going away pick it up and throw it into the cart so unconcernedly that one might suppose it had not been done designedly. I have many a time weighed a cart, and then, after the iron has been tipped up, the cart has been run into the street so that it might not be weighed back again. These tricks are, however, practised only by fresh comers.

How often I have watched them through the window build up a nice little pile, very presentable to the eye, with all the rubbish at the bottom! If there should be any

enamelled plates, or other unsaleable stuff, it is sure to be well covered over. But as a rule these little tricks are easily discovered; we make a practice of pulling the pile about, so as to show the nature of its materials.

THE MAHALAPSI DIAMOND.

CHAPTER II.

THEY breakfasted betimes at the Staarbruckers, and after the meal, Nina having gone into the garden, Otto proceeded to open his proposal to the young Englishman, who had stayed this morning to breakfast. He hinted first that there might be serious difficulty in disposing of so valuable a diamond, and, indeed, as Frank already recognised, that was true enough. The proper course would be to 'declare' the stone to the authorities; but would they accept his story—wildly improbable as it appeared on the face of it?

No one in England can realise the thick and poisonous atmosphere of suspicion and distrust in which the immense diamond industry of Kimberley is enwrapped. Its miasma penetrates everywhere, and protected as is the industry by the most severe and brutal—nay, even degrading—laws and restrictions, which an all-powerful 'ring' has been able to force through the Cape Parliament, no man is absolutely safe from it. And, even Frank, an employé of the great De Beer's Company itself, a servant of proved integrity and some service, might well hesitate before exposing himself to the tremendous difficulty of proving a strong and valid title to the stone in his possession.

'Well, Frank,' said Staarbrucker, 'have you made up your mind about your diamond? What are you going to do with it?'

'I don't quite know yet,' answered Frank, taking his pipe out of his mouth. 'It's a deuced difficult puzzle, and I haven't hit on a solution. What do you advise?' Here was Otto's opening.

'Well, my boy,' he answered, 'I've thought a good deal over the matter, and in my opinion, you'd better keep your discovery to ourselves at present. Now I'm prepared to make you an offer. I'll find the expenses of a prospecting trip to the place where your crocodile came from, and take a competent miner up with us—I know several good men to choose from—on the condition that, in the event of our finding more stones, or a mine, I am to stand in halves with you. I suppose such a trip would cost three hundred pounds or thereabouts. It's a sporting offer; what do you say to it?'

'No, I don't think I'll close at present,' returned Frank; 'I'll take another few hours to think it over. Perhaps I'll mention the matter to an old friend of mine, and take his advice.'

Staarbrucker broke in with some heat: 'If you're going to tell all your friends, you may as well give the show away at once. The thing will be all over "camp,"* and I wash my

* Kimberley is still called by its early name of 'camp' among old inhabitants.

hands of it. Let me tell you, you're doing a most imprudent thing.'

'Really,' said Frank, coolly enough, 'the stone is mine at present, and I take the risk of holding it. I haven't asked you to run yourself into any trouble on my account.'

'No,' returned the other, 'but you are under my roof, and if it became known that I and my sister knew of this find, and of its concealment, we should be practically in the same hole as yourself. Now, my dear boy, take my advice, keep your discovery to yourself till we meet this evening, and let us settle to run this show together. You won't get a better offer, I'm sure of it.'

'Understood; I promise nothing,' said Frank, who scarcely relished Staarbrucker's persistency. 'I'll see you again to-night.'

After dinner that evening, the two men met again. Frank reopened the topic, which had meantime been engrossing Staarbrucker's thoughts to the exclusion of all else.

Frank at once declared his intention of going to see the manager next day, to tell him of the find and take his advice.

Otto Staarbrucker made a gesture of intense annoyance. 'You are never going to play such an infernal fool's game as that, surely?' he burst out. 'I've made you a liberal offer to prospect thoroughly at my own expense, the place where that stone came from, on half shares. If you accept my offer, well and good. If you don't, I shall simply tell your little story to the detective department, and see what they think of it. Think it well over. I'll come and see you to-morrow morning, early.'

He turned on his heel, and went out of the house.

Frank had felt a little uncomfortable during Otto's speech, but now he was angry—so indignant at the turn affairs had taken, and at the threat, idle though it was, held out to him, that he determined next day to quit the house and have done with the man altogether. He had never liked him. True, there was Nina. Nina—so utterly different from her brother. He should be sorry indeed to leave her. She had a very warm corner in his heart. He would miss the pleasant evenings spent in her company. What should he do without her merry *camaraderie*, her kindly, unselfish ways, the near presence of her bewitching face, and her evident preference for his company? At that moment Nina entered the room. Frank looked, as he felt, embarrassed, and the girl saw it at once.

'What's the matter, Mr Farnborough? You ought to look happy with that eight hundred pound diamond of yours; yet you don't. Aren't things going as you like, or what is it?'

'No,' answered Frank, reddening, 'things are not going quite right. Your brother has made me a proposition, which I don't quite see in his light, and we've rather fallen out about it. However, my tiff with Otto need make no difference between you and me. We haven't quarrelled, and I hope you won't let our old friendship be broken on that account.'

'Indeed, no,' returned Nina, 'why should it? But I shall see Otto and talk to him; I can't have you two falling out about a wretched diamond, even although it is a big one. Since

you came here, things have been so much pleasanter, and'—the girl paused, and a flush came to her face, 'well, we can't afford to quarrel, can we? Friends—real friends, I mean—are none too plentiful in Kimberley.'

Nina spoke with a good deal of embarrassment for her, and a good deal of feeling, and she looked so sweet, such an air of tenderness—not unusual to her—shone in her eyes, that Frank was visibly touched.

'Nina,' he said, 'I'm really sorry about this affair. Perhaps in the morning it may blow over. I hope so. I have had something on my mind lately, which perhaps you can guess at, but which I won't enter upon just now. Meanwhile, don't say anything to your brother about this row. Let us see what happens to-morrow. Heaven knows I don't want to quarrel with any one belonging to you.'

Early next morning, while Frank sat up in bed sipping his coffee and smoking a cigarette, the door opened, and Otto Staarbrucker entered the room. He had been thinking over matters a good deal during the night, and had made up his mind that somehow he and Frank *must* pull together over this diamond deal. His big, florid face was a trifle solemn, and he spoke quietly for him. But he found Frank as firm as ever, against his utmost entreaties.

'I've thought it all out,' Frank said; 'I don't like your plan, and I mean to show our manager the stone to-day, and tell him all about it. I think it will be best in the long-run.' He spoke quietly, but with a mind obviously quite made up.

The blood ran to Otto's head again; all his evil passions were getting the upper hand. 'Frank, take care,' he said. 'You are in a dangerous position about this diamond. I don't think you quite realise it. Once more I warn you; don't play the fool. Make up your mind to come in with me and we'll make our fortune over it.'

Frank began to get angry too. 'It's no use harping on that string further. I'm *not* coming in with you under any circumstances, and you may as well clearly understand it, and take no for an answer.' Then, half throwing off the light bed-clothing, 'I must get up and have breakfast.'

Otto glared at him for a second or two before he spoke. 'For the last time I ask you, are you coming in with me?'

There was clear threat in the deliberation of his tones, and Frank grew mad under it.

'Oh, go to the deuce,' he burst out, 'I've had enough of this. Clear out of it; I want to get up.'

Otto stepped to the door. 'I'm going now to the detective office; you'll find you've made a big mistake over this. By Heaven! I'll ruin you, you infernal, stuck-up English pup!'

His face was red with passion; he flung open the door, slammed it after him, and went out into the street.

Frank heard him go. 'All idle bluff,' he said to himself. 'The scoundrel! He must have taken me for an idiot, I think. I've had enough of this, and shall clear out, bag and baggage, to-day. Things are getting too unpleasant.'

He jumped up, poured the water into his bath, and began his ablutions.

Meanwhile, Otto Staarbrucker, raging with anger and malice, was striding along the shady side of the street, straight for the chief detective's house. Despite his tinge of Jewish blood, there was in his system a strong touch of the wild ungovernable temper, not seldom found in the Teutonic race. It was not long before he had reached the detective's house, and announced himself. Carefully subduing, as far as possible, the outward manifestation of his malicious wrath, he informed the acute official, to whom he was, at his own request, shown, that his lodger, Mr Farnborough, was in possession of a valuable unregistered diamond, which he stated he had found in a stuffed crocodile's interior, or some equally improbable place. That to his own knowledge the stone had been unregistered for some days, although he had repeatedly urged Farnborough to declare it; that the whole surroundings of the case were, to his mind, very suspicious; and, finally, that, as he could not take the responsibility of such a position of affairs under his roof, he had come down to report the matter.

The detective pricked up his ears at the story, reflected for a few moments, and then said: 'I suppose there is no mistake about this business, Mr Staarbrucker. It's, as you know, a very serious matter, and may mean the "Breakwater." Mr Farnborough has a good position in De Beers, and some strong friends, and it seems rather incredible (although we're never surprised at anything, where diamonds are in question) that he should have got himself into such a mess as you tell me.'

'I am quite certain of what I tell you,' replied Staarbrucker. 'If you go up to my house now, you'll find Farnborough in his bedroom, and the stone's somewhere on him, or in his room. Don't lose time.'

'Well,' responded the detective, 'I'll see to the matter at once. So long, Mr Staarbrucker!'

Mr Flecknoe, the shrewdest and most active diamond official in Kimberley, as was his wont, lost not an instant. He nosed the tainted gale of a quarry. In this case he was a little uncertain, it is true; but yet there was the tell-tale taint, the true diamond taint, and it must at once be followed. Mr Flecknoe ran very mute upon a trail, and in a few minutes he was at Staarbrucker's bungalow. Staarbrucker himself had, wisely perhaps, gone down to his store, there to await events. Vitriolic anger still ran hotly within him. He cared for nothing in the world, and was perfectly reckless, provided only that Frank Farnborough were involved in ruin, complete and utter.

Mr Flecknoe knocked, as a matter of form, in a pleasant, friendly way at the open door of the cottage, and then walked straight in. He seemed to know his way very completely—there were few things in Kimberley that he did not know—and he went straight to Frank's bedroom, knocked again and entered. Frank was by this time out of his bath, and in the act of shaving. It cannot be denied that the detective's appearance, so soon after Staarbrucker's threat, rather staggered him, and he paled per-

ceptibly. The meshes of the I.D.B.* nets are terribly entangling, as Frank knew only too well, and I.D.B. laws are no matters for light jesting. Mr Flecknoe noted the change of colour.

'Well, Mr Flecknoe,' said the younger man, as cheerily as he could muster, for he knew the detective very well, 'what can I do for you?'

'I've come about the diamond, Mr Farnborough; I suppose you can show title to it?'

'No, I can't show a title,' replied Frank. 'It came into my possession in a very astounding way a day or two since, and I was going to tell the manager all about it to-day and "declare" the stone.'

Frank then proceeded to tell the detective shortly the whole story, and finally, the scene with Staarbrucker that morning.

Flecknoe listened patiently enough, and at the end said quietly: 'I am afraid, Mr Farnborough, you have been a little rash. I shall have to ask you to come down to the office with me and explain further. Have you the stone?'

'Yes, here's the stone,' replied Frank, producing the diamond from a little bag from under his pillow, and exhibiting it on his palm. 'I won't hand it over to you at this moment, but I'll willingly do so at the office in presence of third parties. Just let me finish shaving, and I'll come along.'

'Very well,' said Mr Flecknoe, rather grimly, taking a chair. 'I'll wait.'

That evening, some astounding rumours concerning a De Beer's official were afloat in Kimberley. Farnborough's absence from his usual place at the 'Central' *table d'hôte* was noticed significantly, and next morning the whole camp was made aware, by the daily paper, of some startling occurrences. Two days later it became known that Frank Farnborough had been sent for trial on a charge of I.D.B.; that his friend Staarbrucker had, with manifest reluctance, given important and telling evidence against him; that bail had been, for the present, refused, and that the unfortunate young man, but twenty-four hours since a universal Kimberley favourite, well known at cricket, football, and other diversions, now lay in prison in imminent peril of some years' penal servitude at Capetown Breakwater. The camp shook its head, said to itself 'Another good man gone wrong,' instanced, conversationally over the bars of the 'Transvaal,' 'Central,' and other resorts, the cases of many promising young men who had gone under, victims of the poisonous fascination of the diamond, and went about its business.

But there was a certain small leaven of real friends, who refused utterly to believe in Frank's guilt. These busied themselves unweariedly in organising his defence, cabling to friends in England, collecting evidence, and doing all in their power to bring their favourite through one of the heaviest ordeals that a man may be confronted with.

The morning of the trial came at last. The season was now South African mid-winter;

* I.D.B., Illicit Diamond Buying, a highly criminal offence in South Africa.

there was a clear blue sky over Kimberley, and the air was crisp, keen, and sparkling under the brilliant sunlight. The two judges and resident magistrate came into court, alert and sharp-set, and proceedings began. Frank was brought in for trial, looking white and harassed, yet determined.

As he came into court, and faced the crowded gathering of advocates, solicitors, witnesses, and spectators—for this was a *cause célèbre* in Kimberley—he was encouraged to see, here and there, the cheering nod and smile, and even the subdued wave of the hand, of many sympathising friends, black though the case looked against him. And he was fired, too, by the flame of indignation as he saw before him the big, florid face—now a trifle more florid even than usual from suppressed excitement—and the shining, up-turned eyeglasses of his arch-enemy and lying betrayer, Otto Staarbrucker. Thank God! Nina was not in the assembly; she, at least, had no part or lot in this shameful scene. And yet, after what had passed, could Nina be trusted? Nina, with all her friendliness, her even tenderer feelings, was but the sister of Otto Staarbrucker. Her conduct ever since Frank's committal had been enigmatical; her brother, it was to be supposed, had guarded her safely, and, although she had been subpoenaed upon Frank's behalf, she had vouchsafed no evidence, nor given a sign of interest in her former friend's fate.

Counsel for the prosecution, a well-known official of Griqualand West, opened the case in his gravest and most impressive manner. The offence, for which the prisoner was to be tried was, he said, although unhappily but too familiar to Kimberley people, one of the gravest in the Colony. One feature of this unhappy case was the position of the prisoner, who, up to the time of the alleged offence, had borne an unimpeachable character, and had been well known as one of the most popular young men in Kimberley. Possibly, this very popularity had furnished the reason for the crime, the cause of the downfall. Popularity, as most men knew, was, in Kimberley, an expensive luxury, and it would be shown that for some time past, Farnborough had moved and lived in a somewhat extravagant set. The learned counsel then proceeded to unfold with great skill the case for the prosecution. Mr Staarbrucker, an old friend of the prisoner, and a gentleman of absolutely unimpeachable testimony, would, with the greatest reluctance, prove that he had by chance found Farnborough in possession of a large and valuable stone, which the prisoner—apparently surprised in the act of admiring—had alleged, in a confused way, to have been found—in what?—in the interior of a dried crocodile! One of the most painful features of this case would be the evidence of Miss Staarbrucker, who, though with even more reluctance than her brother, would corroborate in every detail the surprising of the prisoner in possession of the stolen diamond. He approached this part of the evidence with extreme delicacy, but in the interest of justice, it would be necessary to show that a friendship of the closest possible nature, to put it in no tenderer light, had latterly sprung into existence between the prisoner and the young lady in question.

Clearly then, no evidence could well be stronger than the evidence, wrung from Miss Staarbrucker with the greatest reluctance and the deepest pain, as to the finding of Farnborough in possession of the diamond, and of the lame and utterly incredible tale invented by him on the spur of the moment, when thus surprised by the brother and sister. The evidence of Mr and Miss Staarbrucker would be closely supported by that of Mr Flecknoe, the well-known Kimberley detective, who had made the arrest. Mr Staarbrucker, it would be shown, had urged upon the prisoner for two entire days the absolute necessity of giving up and 'declaring' the stone. Finally, certain grave suspicions had, chiefly from the demeanour of Farnborough, forced themselves into his mind. One more interview he had with the prisoner, and then, upon his again declining absolutely to take the only safe and proper course open to him, Mr Staarbrucker had, for his own protection, proceeded to the detective department, and himself informed the authorities of the presence of the stone. No man could have done more for his friend. He had risked his own and his sister's safety for two days—he could do no more. The prisoner's statement to the Staarbruckers and to Mr Flecknoe was that the crocodile skin came from the Mahalapsi River in North Bechuanaland, and that the stone must have been picked up and swallowed by the living reptile somewhere in those regions. He, counsel, need hardly dwell upon the wildness, the ludicrous impossibility, of such a theory. Three witnesses of the highest credibility and reputation, well known in Kimberley, and in the markets of London and Amsterdam, as experts in diamonds, would declare upon oath that the so-called 'Mahalapsi Diamond'—the learned counsel rolled out the phrase with a fine flavour of humorous disdain—came, not from the far-off borders of the Bechuanaland river, but from the recesses of the De Beer's mine—from Kimberley itself!*

Here there was a visible 'sensation' (that mysterious compound of shifting, whispering, and restless movement) in court. 'Yes,' continued the advocate, 'the stone is beyond all shadow of a doubt a De Beer's stone. It is not registered. The prisoner has no title to it; the diamond is a stolen diamond; and if, as I have little doubt, I shall succeed in proving my facts to you clearly and incontestably, the prisoner must take the consequences of his guilt. If indeed he be guilty, then let justice, strict but not vindictive justice, be done. Kimberley, in spite of the severest penalties, the most deterrent legislation, is still eaten up and honeycombed by the vile, illicit traffic in diamonds.'

The advocate warmed to his peroration, and, as he was a holder of De Beer's shares, he naturally felt what he said. The court was already becoming warm. He took out his handkerchief

* It is perfectly well known in South Africa that diamond experts can at once pick out a particular stone and indicate its mine of origin. Practice has created perfection in this respect, and stones, whether from De Beers, Du Toit's Pan, Bultfontein, the Kimberley mine, or the Vaal River, can be at once identified.

and wiped his brow. It is hot work delivering an important speech in South Africa. 'In the name of Heaven, I say,' he continued, striking the desk with his clenched fist, 'let us have done with this vile and monstrous traffic, that renders our city—the foremost city in South Africa—a byword and a laughing-stock among the nations.'

SHOEBURYNESS.

A FEW years ago we gave in the pages of this *Journal* (No. 380, April 11, 1891) some account of Woolwich arsenal, the birthplace of *Woolwich Infants*, as the great guns there manufactured are sometimes fancifully called; and a little later (No. 452, August 27, 1892) we described the small-arms factory at Enfield. It may not be now uninteresting to our readers if we say something about the portion of the county of Essex in which experiments are carried out with the guns, large and small, manufactured at these two places, and briefly mention some of the experiments themselves, and their results.

A ness may be best described as a blunt-shaped, low-lying tongue of land running out into the sea, hardly a point, much less a promontory or headland. The entrance to the estuary of the Thames is guarded by two such natural features, exactly opposite to one another. That to the north is known as Shoeburyness, and that to the south is called Sheerness. Between the two the great river finds its way to the German Ocean, amidst, especially on the northern side, shoals and sandbanks. Sheerness is a protected arsenal and dockyard which guards the mouth of the Medway, and has been selected for this purpose on account of the excellent anchorage which the mouth of that river affords for large ships of war. Shoeburyness, on the other hand, has become a military station, not because of any advantages afforded by its position on the sea, but because it consists of a large tract of dreary marshes, flanked to the south and east by the far-stretching Maplin sands, which are almost entirely uncovered at low-water. These sands form the attraction from a scientific point of view, and why so, we shall see later on. The place is said to take its name from the words *Seco* and *Byrig*, which signify—the *Byrig*, or settlement, in the shaw or wood. Here Hastings, the viking, constructed one of his sea-coast fortifications or camps, the lines of which may still be traced. Of other ancient history of Shoeburyness there is none.

The first connection of Shoeburyness with modern military matters appears to have been made so lately as the time of the Crimean war, when the flat, rough marshland was used as a camping ground for men and horses with the view of accustoming both to the hard work which lay before them in the east. This tract of country has thus become the property of the War Department, and that administrative body soon found another use for it, in which the half-submerged sands were to bear an important part. The idea was conceived that targets might be erected on these sands, and that the

projectiles which were fired at them might be recovered at low water. Hence the first connection of Shoeburyness with the artillery of the present day. A safe range can be found across the sands to almost any distance, and these marshes have therefore become the stage on which our great guns, such as Armstrongs and Whitworths, have made, so to speak, their first debut.

To reach Shoeburyness we take the railway which runs along the south coast of Essex and the northern bank of the Thames. As we near the mouth of the estuary we pass Southend, beloved of *trippers*, with its pier stretching out in its length of over a mile, and then cross the base of the ness itself, until we reach the sea again. On the south-eastern face of the ness we are at our journey's end, and the railway also, so far as the general public is concerned, has come to a full stop. We walk through the little town or village, and on the further side find what we may call the original settlement of gunnery experiments, now for the most part a group of barracks and quarters such as we might find at any military station. A few differences we notice, however, for as we pass through the barrack-yard we observe that one building is labelled 'Lecture-room,' and other evidences there are here and there that the artillerymen who are quartered here are not altogether engaged in their ordinary duties. We shall probably not linger long at the barracks, but we shall not fail to observe that the officers' quarters and mess-room occupy an extremely pleasant position on a wooded bank above the sea, and that at high-water the waves come rippling up to the very trees themselves. Further on are the houses appropriated to married officers, all alike situated on the pleasant sea-bank. We note many rowing and sailing boats lying off the mess-buildings. Alas! these craft sometimes prove a source of fatality to some of the young officers who, however well instructed they may be in their professional duties, yet know nothing of practical seamanship. Parties of young men in the prime of life, and just entering one of the finest branches of the British service, have gone off in high spirits for an afternoon's sail, and, caught by tide, or current, or squall, have never returned. More fortunate are those who have been able to make their way from a capsized boat to the Nore lightship, and there, perhaps, have remained a day or two until the gale had abated and they could be taken off.

But it is time we should leave the officers' quarters, and walk round the outside of the domain. We see in front of us huge wooden erections standing on the edge of the shore. These are conning towers from which, when practice is going on, a view is obtained of the direction of the shot. Beneath them are the batteries from which the guns are fired, and here go on the courses of instruction in practical artillery work, which are necessary for newly-joined officers.

But we have by no means seen the most important part of Shoeburyness when we have visited the barracks and the batteries. We notice that a line of rails winds its way in and out amongst guns and storehouses, and if we

have timed our visit right, we shall find a little miniature train just about to start for what is called *The New Range*. Taking our places in this train, we shall be carried first through the village and past the terminus of the public line, and then by a private railway which winds along amongst the corn-fields, until we reach a retired spot on the sea-shore hemmed in by lofty trees. In this private place are carried on all the experiments for which Shoeburyness is famous, and here both guns and explosives are tested to their utmost capability.

It is not altogether an unpicturesque spot at which we have arrived. Grouped together in the shaw to which we have already referred, are certain nice old farmhouses and other buildings which have been taken possession of by the military. The space in front would no doubt be an admirable rabbit-warren, only the whole ground is now covered by guns of various sizes, targets, shields, breast-works, and models of portions of iron-clad and other vessels. Amongst these run lines of rails by which guns and materials can be moved to any part of the ground; and in places there are overhead travelling cranes by which heavy cannon may be hoisted on to or off from their carriages, or into trucks, as need may require; and we again see lofty conning-towers, though target practice at a distance is not carried on here to the same extent as it is in that portion of the establishment which we first visited. The work at *The New Range* is connected rather with experiments as to the force of explosives and the penetrating power of projectiles, than with accuracy of aim and the direction of the shot.

We ought first to say a few words about modern explosives. Old-fashioned gunpowder, or *black powder*, as it is now usually called, is composed of saltpetre, charcoal, and sulphur, mixed together in the proportion usually of seventy-five, fifteen, and ten parts respectively. But explosives of the present day are composed of other substances. Cordite (*Journal*, No. 605, August 3, 1895), of which we now hear so much, is made of nitro-glycerine, gun-cotton, and mineral jelly in the proportion of fifty-seven, thirty-eight, and five parts. It is also steeped in a preparation of acetone. Gun-cotton itself is dipped in a mixture of three parts of sulphuric to one of nitric acid. The force of cordite over gunpowder may be judged from the following facts. A cartridge containing seventy grains of black powder fired in the ordinary rifle of the army will give what is called a muzzle velocity of one thousand three hundred and fifty feet a second, while thirty grains only of cordite will give a velocity of two thousand feet. In larger arms, a little less than a pound of cordite fired in a twelve-pounder gun will give more velocity than four pounds of black powder fired in the same weapon. It need hardly be said that in the experiments at Shoeburyness it is the new-fashioned explosive which is chiefly used.

And now having some idea of what we are to see, let us walk round *The New Range*, and examine what is to be found there a little more in detail, bearing in mind that the work carried on is first the erection of bulkheads and iron plates, and then the knocking to pieces, or piercing of these erections. There is no regu-

lar order or arrangement in these matters. A target is built up in any convenient spot, and then a gun is brought to bear upon it from any suitable position.

Let us examine one of the guns, a breech-loader, and see what improvements have been made which may conduce to rapidity of fire. We see that in the older pattern three motions were necessary to open the breech. First the bar which is fixed across the base of the block had to be removed, then a half turn had to be given to the block to free it in its bed, and then it had to be pulled forward. Lastly, it had to be thrown back on its hinge so as to open the gun from end to end. We are shown that in later patterns the cavity or bed into which the block fits, is made in the form of a cone, so that the breech block itself can be turned outwards without any preliminary motion forward. In artillery work time is everything, and any one motion of the gunner's hands and arms saved is a point gained. Now let us look at the mechanism by which the recoil or backward movement of the gun is checked at the moment of firing. The gun slides in its cradle, and its recoil is counteracted by buffers which work in oil, something in the fashion of the oil springs which we see on doors. Iron spiral springs push the gun back again into place. Another interesting piece of mechanism is the electric machinery by which the gun is fired. When the recoil has taken place, the wire, along which runs the electric current, is pushed out of place, so that it is impossible to fire the gun, even though it be loaded, until it has been again fixed in its proper position on the cradle. Truly a modern cannon is a wonderful machine, and yet it is only a development from the sort of iron gas-pipe which was used in the middle ages. Hard by is a gun which has come to grief. In experiments which are carried on at Shoeburyness, guns are charged to their full, or, as in this case, more than their full strength. There is an ugly gash running down the outer case or jacket, as it is called, of the gun, and the latter has broken, and nearly jumped out of, its cradle. Nursery phraseology certainly comes in strongly in the technical slang of gunnery when we have to do with *Woolwich Infants*.

Let us turn now to some guns of quite a different pattern. They are old muzzle-loading ships' guns which have been rifled, and are now fitted on carriages which can elevate them at an angle of about seventy degrees. At this elevation they are capable of throwing a shell of four hundred pounds on to the deck of a ship which may be some thousands of yards distant. Such a projectile descending from above would be an unpleasant surprise to an iron-clad which had been putting confidence in her armoured turrets and sides alone. We can also see close by a specimen of the ingenious Moncrieff gun-carriage, in which the recoil of the gun is made to serve a useful purpose, and lowers the weapon into a sunk pit in which it can be safely loaded, and even sighted by means of mirrors, before it again pops its muzzle over the edge of the protecting bank or breast-work.

After looking at the guns we naturally go on to look at the targets at which they are fired.

Targets at *The New Range* are not so much marks as specimens of armour plates and other protections. Some of these are built up with a strength which to the uninitiated appears to be proof against any attack. Here, for instance, we find a steel plate of eighteen inches in thickness, and behind this, six inches of iron, the whole backed up by huge baulks of timber. But notwithstanding its depth, the enormous mass has been dented and cracked, and in places pierced. When we look at plates which are not quite so thick, we see that the shells have formed what are pretty and regular patterns, for small triangles of metal have been splintered off and turned back, so that the aperture is decorated with a circle of leaves, and resembles a rose with the centre cut out. Where the shell has entered the plate before it bursts, the pattern remains very perfect; but when it explodes as it touches the surface, some of the encircling leaves are entirely cut off.

One target is pointed out to us which represents the iron casing of the vulnerable portions of a torpedo boat, consisting of engine-room, boilers, and coal-bunkers. These compartments have been riddled again and again. Even a service-rifle bullet can penetrate one side, and a shell of the smallest size will go through both, for torpedo boats are not very heavily built.

Although the experiments which are carried on at Shoeburyness have almost entirely to do with ships' guns and ships' sides, yet they are carried on by officers and men of the Royal Artillery, though there are some naval officers amongst the experts who have to do with the professional secrets and inventions. That is to say, the guns are manned and fired by artillery gunners under the direction of artillery officers. That they should do so seems to be one illustration, amongst many, of their motto *Ubique*. They were probably the first occupants of the ground when the Government acquired it, and they have remained in possession of it. And yet considering to what end the experiments are directed, we may say that Shoeburyness is a point of junction between the two services. Perhaps the day is not far distant when the army and navy may be fused together in one body which, whether it operates by land or by sea for the defence of our rights and the safeguard of our country, will, we trust, ever remember that it exists for defence and not for defiance.

MR SOWERBY'S PLOT.

By JOHN K. LEYS, Author of *The Lawyer's Secret*, &c.

CHAPTER I.—HOW THE MINE WAS LAID.

MR ALFRED MOULTON, the editor and proprietor of *Financial Echoes*, lay back in his chair one hot July day, chewing the cud of a rather bitter reflection. His journal, in which he had invested every penny he possessed, had not proved a success. He longed to sell the paper; but purchasers were shy, very shy. Meantime, he was carrying it on at a slight loss, in the hope of being able to sell it by-and-by.

As Moulton was wondering how he was going to pull through the dead season, which was close at hand, the door opened, and a lanky

youth, who filled the various posts of manager, cashier, and sub-editor of the *Financial Echoes*, ushered a tall, well-dressed man into the room. The appearance of the stranger was such as to convince the beholder of his prosperity; and Moulton pulled himself together and bowed before asking his visitor to sit down.

'I didn't give my name to the clerk,' said the stranger, 'because I am here merely in the capacity of agent; and I should not wish it to be known that I ever visit the office of a financial newspaper. You will understand this when I tell you that my name is Sowerby—George Sowerby, the financier.'

This announcement did not make any great impression on the editor. He had heard of Sowerby as a clever and not very scrupulous fisher in the troubled waters of the City; and that was all. He looked at the financier now with some interest, and saw a large face, smooth shaven but for a heavy black moustache and very short coal-black whiskers. The man's manner was of that keen, self-assertive, aggressive type common among the worshippers of Mammon. The habit of trampling on everybody who would submit to the process had given Mr Sowerby the look of a bully, though it was veiled under a varnish of politeness.

He waited a moment, as if to give Mr Moulton time to be impressed by his personality, and continued: 'A friend of mine, named Smithson, wants to purchase a financial journal; and as I heard some time ago that your paper was for sale, I thought I would look in and see if terms could be arranged.'

This was good news to Mr Moulton; but he knew that it would never do to snap at the bait too readily. 'Well,' he replied, pulling his moustache with an air of indecision, 'some little time ago I did think of selling the paper. But I'm not quite sure now what I shall do. My own belief is that a financial crisis is at hand. The storm may burst at any moment; and in that case the *Financial Echoes* would be a very valuable property.'

'How so?'

Mr Moulton smiled and said nothing.

'What do you call valuable?' demanded the financier.

'I should say it would be worth five or six thousand pounds.'

'Let us talk sense,' said the City man coolly.

'You have hardly any circulation, and no advertisements worth speaking of. Three hundred pounds I should consider an outside price.'

'If you call that talking sense, you are mistaken,' said the proprietor of the *Financial Echoes* with some heat.

'What will you take, then?'

'I'll take a thousand pounds.'

'I'll give you seven-fifty.'

'Done!'

In five minutes more a memorandum of the bargain was signed; next day the price agreed on was paid; and the day following, the lanky youth was promoted to the post of editor *pro tem*. That afternoon, Mr Sowerby, acting (as he said) as agent for the new proprietor, handed to his new editor—whose name was Daniels—an article to be printed as leader, in leaded type. It was rather a

peculiar sort of article, as Daniels observed at the time. It began by discussing the sinister rumours which had been circulating in the City for some days concerning the credit of various banking establishments. Then it went on to say that at such a crisis a financial journal had a heavy responsibility laid upon it, a duty to its subscribers and to the public; and that a sense of this responsibility compelled 'us' to say that these rumours, far from exaggerating, had understated the truth. As an example of the unsoundness of some bank in the City, an instance was given of one which was living literally from hand to mouth. The bulk of its capital was lent out at high rates of interest to Chinamen, South Americans, and Spaniards, who could not possibly pay up on demand, if at all. This was, as a matter of fact, the sort of security upon which credulous Englishmen lent their money, blindly trusting to the magic power of the word 'bank' to save them harmless. It was evident enough that the writer of the article had a particular establishment in his eye. A specific bank was referred to, though no name was given; and details of the assets and liabilities of the concern were quoted in such a way as to leave on the reader's mind a strong impression that they had been copied from a private balance-sheet that actually existed. It was plain from these figures that the bank aimed at was in a very risky state; but no hint was given as to which particular establishment it was.

The article was put in type; and Mr Sowerby condescended to ask Mr Daniels—as if entirely for his own amusement—some details as to the way of 'making up' a paper. This was on the afternoon of the day on which *Financial Echoes* went to press.

CHAPTER II.—HOW THE TRAIN WAS FIRED.

On the evening of the following day, Mr Benjamin Buddicombe was sitting in his library alone, smoking his post-prandial cigar. It was a good cigar; and Mr Buddicombe deserved it, for it had been a hard day with him. He was the only acting partner in the banking house of Buddicombe Brothers, and things had not been going well with the bank of late. People kept very small balances, as a rule; and to get decent interest in this country on good security seemed impossible. Hence Mr Buddicombe had been tempted to invest a good deal of money in South American securities; and the result was that the bank, though perfectly solvent, was in a position of unstable equilibrium. What Mr Buddicombe feared was a sudden demand on his resources; and just then storms were brewing in the City which made the banker anxious.

In addition to this, Mrs Buddicombe had that evening increased his anxieties by informing him that his eldest daughter, Claribel, the beauty of the family, was, or fancied herself to be, in love with the music-master. This intelligence put Mr Buddicombe into a rage. He knew nothing about any music-master. True, he had occasionally, when he happened to be going late into the City, met in the avenue a pale-faced, long-haired young man carrying a violin case; and had dimly conjectured that he was on his

way to give the children dancing lessons. Now he was told that the young man was a 'professor' of the violin; that he had been instructing Claribel in the use of that instrument for some months; that the two had 'occasionally' been left alone together for short periods; that something roused Mrs Buddicombe's suspicions; and that on inquiry these suspicions had been amply confirmed.

Of course all this made the banker very angry. He cursed Signor Rolfini with great heartiness, scolded his wife, blew up his daughter, and finished off by sending a cheque with a letter of dismissal for the musician, and issuing a decree that Clare—as she was generally called—was to set out for Ireland the very next day on a visit to her Aunt Bridget. This Aunt Bridget was a Miss O'Feely, a maiden lady, who lived all by herself in a great, gaunt, stone house, standing in a bog in the wildest part of County Galway. She was in reality Clare's grand-aunt, being Mrs Buddicombe's aunt, not her sister. If any of Mrs Buddicombe's children behaved very badly, they were packed off at once to Ballykilbeg—the gaunt stone house above mentioned—by way of punishment. In the present case, the sentence had the additional advantage that it would effectually prevent the two young idiots—as Mr Buddicombe regarded them—from meeting one another.

The banker had caused his wife to write a note to Miss O'Feely then and there, begging leave to send over dear Clare for a few days' change. Having despatched this missive to the post, and thus settled matters to his satisfaction, he sat down to dinner. Under the influence of food, wine, coffee, and tobacco, he soon attained a happier frame of mind. Mr Buddicombe was getting near the end of his after-dinner cigar, when a footman entered the room bearing a card on a salver.

'What the dickens can this mean?' he muttered to himself as he took up the card. 'Sowerby!—Sowerby! Show him in.'

Mr Buddicombe was more than surprised; he was agitated by this visit. Not twelve months before, Mr Sowerby had been his friend, and a frequent visitor at his house. More than this, Mr Sowerby had been a suitor for Claribel's hand; he had been madly in love with the girl; and at one time it seemed likely enough that his suit would be successful. The banker, however, had found out things about Mr Sowerby, and had cooled towards him perceptibly, finally going so far as to hint that his visits had better be discontinued.

And here was this man, without a word of warning, paying a visit at a quarter to ten o'clock at night, as if he had been a most intimate friend of the family. It was very strange, so strange that the banker had at once ordered the visitor to be admitted.

The two men met face to face in the middle of the large room.

'Buddicombe, have you an enemy?' was Mr Sowerby's greeting.

'Not that I know of; and yet—I don't know. Why do you ask?'

'You *must* have an enemy, a bold and a powerful one too. I have this very night, by the merest accident, discovered an infernal plot

against you—a plot to ruin you. It *may* be that I am able to prevent it, though I doubt it.'

'What on earth do you mean?'

'First tell me this: do you promise me absolute inviolate secrecy as to what I may say to you?'

'Yes; of course.'

'And do you promise that you will do your best to keep my name out of it, and—in fact—save me harmless?'

'Certainly.'

'Then I'll tell you.—You know *Financial Echoes* ?'

'I have heard of the paper.'

'This is a copy of the next issue which is to come out to-morrow morning. That is the leading article. Just sit down and cast your eye over it and tell me what you think of it.'

With these words he handed a copy of the journal to the banker, who sat down and began to read the article, which was marked with a long blue-pencil line. The banker read the first few sentences; and then something made him start. He read a little further, and his face became white as his shirt-front; still he read on, and the beads of perspiration stood on his forehead, while the hand that held the paper trembled, so that he could hardly see the words.

'That wretch Harrington, my manager, has betrayed me!' he gasped out at length.

'Is it possible?' cried Sowerby. 'Then these figures are correct—they do really show the state of your business?'

Mr Buddicombe saw too late that he had made a fatal admission. He hung his head over the paper, and went on reading the article to the end, while Sowerby sat by in perfect silence. When the banker had finished the article, his eye, led by a continuation of the blue-pencil line, lighted upon a paragraph immediately under the closing lines of the leader, the first of a series of notes headed 'Straight Tips.' This paragraph contained the poison for which the preceding article served as vehicle. Taken by itself it seemed harmless enough. Placed where it had been placed, it made known to all men conversant with the City that the bank referred to in the article was that of Buddicombe Brothers.

The unhappy victim sprang to his feet with an oath. 'This shall not go forth to the world!' he shouted. 'This is a criminal conspiracy—I shall have the scoundrels arrested and brought up at the Old Bailey. There is law in England yet. The villains shall smart for this!'

'Yes; but meantime you will be irretrievably ruined!' cried Mr Sowerby. 'Just think a moment. You may apply for an injunction, or a warrant, or whatever you like, at ten o'clock to-morrow morning. But copies of *Financial Echoes* will be all over London, Liverpool, and Manchester by that time. More than that—the scoundrels tell me that they have got a list of your customers, from the treacherous clerk, no doubt, who supplied the figures for their libellous article. And their plan is to post a copy of the paper, marked like that, to each one of them.'

Again the banker sprang to his feet; but

this time his cry of rage and terror was inarticulate.

'Sit down, Buddicombe; calm yourself. Look the thing in the face,' said Mr Sowerby.

'Perhaps it's a lie,' gasped the quivering wretch.

Sowerby shook his head. 'Morrison & Sons were named to me,' he said, 'and Burtons, and Druce, and MacGregor, and—'

'There—that'll do. That's enough for me. I am ruined. I see that clearly enough. Some wretch'—He stopped, and threw a suspicious glance at his friend.

'How came *you* to know all this, Sowerby?' he asked.

'Partly by accident; and then when I found you were the man aimed at, I ferreted it out, in the hope of being able to serve you. I tried to bribe the conspirators; but it was of no use. One of them was quite determined. The other, I could see, wavered a bit. I spoke to him afterwards, and found that he *could* stop the impression from being posted. But when I talked of buying him, he named a sum so far beyond my powers, that'—

'How much was it?' asked the banker hoarsely.

The answer was given in a whisper; and it was received with an oath. 'That's as much as half my fortune!' cried Mr Buddicombe.

Mr Sowerby sighed, and mournfully shook his head. There was a minute or two of silence.

'Look here, Buddicombe,' he said, laying his hand on the banker's knee—'let me be your friend in this. We used to be friends, before somebody set you against me; why, I don't know. Perhaps I had a secret enemy as well as you. Never mind. Let by-gones be by-gones. Take me back into favour. Promise me your daughter—you know how I love her; and she was getting to be fond of me when you put your foot on it. Make me your son-in-law, and take me into partnership, and I'll crush these vipers for you. I will, even if I have to shoot them through the head.'

'That's nonsense!' said Buddicombe.

'Well, I'll spend every penny I have in bribing the one I know to be bribeable. But you must give me a bill to be discounted in case of accidents—in case of his wanting more money than I can find. I will not cash it without telling you. But I positively must have an acceptance for eighty thousand pounds—say seventy-nine thousand nine hundred odd pounds to make it look like a trade bill. With that in my pocket, I can make sure of stopping the libel. What do you say?'

The banker contented himself with shooting another suspicious glance at his visitor.

'Your bill won't be touched,' said Sowerby emphatically. 'Understand me; I'm not going to fight for a stranger; but I'll fight like a fiend incarnate for you as my father-in-law, and for a partnership in your house. The bank will weather the storm, I know, if we can only get over this pitfall. Once the settlements are signed and the marriage is celebrated, you shall have back your acceptance; never fear.'

Mr Buddicombe put his elbows on his knees, dropped his head into his hands, and tried to think. He more than suspected that Sowerby

was himself the prime mover in this diabolical plot, in spite of all his protestations. But what then? The banker knew that Sowerby was a determined, vindictive man, quite capable, if he were balked of his desire, of ruining the man who had stood in his way, for the mere pleasure of the thing. If he refused the scoundrel's terms, this too true libel would be in everybody's hands in the morning. There would certainly be a run on the bank, and the shutters must be put up at once. No doubt about that. Then, if he pretended to agree to the man's terms, to gain delay, meaning to cheat him of the promised reward, Sowerby would discount the bill, and he would be ruined in that way, just as certainly as he would be in the other. That, no doubt, was the object of the bill. But what was he to do? Oh, what was he to do?

'Time is passing, sir,' said Sowerby. 'I made it a point that the newspapers should not be posted before two o'clock; but it is getting late.' 'I cannot decide without consulting my daughter,' said the banker, in a voice hoarse with excitement.

He rang the bell and asked for his wife.

Ten minutes later, Claribel, in a lovely blue dressing-gown, her shining yellow hair coiled up anyhow on the top of her pretty head, her blue eyes wide open with astonishment, came into the room.

'Sit down, my child,' said the banker, leading her gently to a sofa. 'You remember Mr Sowerby?'

The girl blushed as she gave her old admirer her hand.

'Clare,' said her father gravely, 'I am on the brink of ruin; and, so far as I can see, you alone can save me. But you must not do violence to your inclinations. Understand that clearly. I would rather spend my old age in a workhouse than sacrifice you to a man whom you positively disliked.' With this prologue the banker proceeded to tell his daughter of the frightful danger that threatened him, and of the way of escape that had been suggested. He even told her of the bill of exchange arrangement, so that she might not be tempted to make an engagement that she did not mean to keep.

Of course the poor girl was dreadfully agitated, torn, as it were, by conflicting emotions.

'If you really loved me,' she said through her tears, turning to Mr Sowerby, 'you would not wish to—to'—

'Dear Miss Buddicombe! Dear Clare! It is the very strength and—and fierceness of my love that forces me to make this a condition of my helping your father. I shall have to pay away almost all I have to bribe this villain into silence. Why should I do that for a stranger? But if you promise to be my wife, what is there I would not do for you or yours?'

The painful scene lasted for some time; but finally the girl said that she could not stand by and see her father ruined, while she had power to prevent it. She had never disliked Mr Sowerby; and if he insisted on it, she would do what he asked her.

'But when?' cried the enraptured lover. 'In a fortnight?'

'Oh no! no! No!'

'In three weeks, then? A month? Really, I don't think I could wait longer than a month,' said Mr Sowerby; and, as he was clearly master of the situation, he had his way. The wedding-day was fixed for the 7th of September; and Mr Sowerby produced a slip of blue paper with a very heavy stamp at one end of it, and began to fill in the necessary words. This incident convinced the banker that Sowerby was himself at the bottom of the plot. But he was helpless—caught in a vice. He and his daughter sat side by side, gazing on the bit of paper which was to bind them as with an iron fetter.

The bill was signed. Claribel allowed her lover to kiss her cheek; and as the clock struck twelve the trio separated.

Next day the subscribers to *Financial Echoes* did not receive the paper as usual. The journal had ceased to exist.

NEW RAYS.

WILL men still say the light is good,
When nothing lies from it concealed;
When, thrown on living flesh and blood,
It shows a skeleton revealed?

We aye have loved the softened rays
Which will not let us see too much,
But wrap, as in a kindly haze,
The things that shrink from human touch.

We hide our skeletons away
When they have played their living part,
And shut them from the light of day
Within the twilight of the heart.

And all the wrongs that shock and shame
Our tender feeling or our pride—
The sullied honour, tarnished name—
In dim forgetfulness we hide.

But now we dread lest some fierce beam
More strong than our resistance prove,
And make us look where only seem
Unlovely relics of our love.

And yet, it may be, we were wise
To welcome each new ray of light,
And face with frank, courageous eyes,
What now we bury out of sight.

'Tis not, perchance, true self-control,
Nor any part of charity,
To shut the windows of the soul
'Gainst all we do not choose to see.

New light, which shines on earth, may tell
How brighter rays, which shine above,
Can touch the lowest depths of hell,
Yet touch with tender tints of love.

C. J. BODEN.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 642.—VOL. XIII.

SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

THE TOP HAT.

LIVING as we do in times when so much attention is directed to rational and hygienic dress, it seems curious that the top hat still survives, and has not gone the way of the crinoline and powdered wigs. But in spite of its admitted liability to be blown off by sudden gusts of wind, or crushed by contact with some unseen projection, it retains with much firmness its long-established position. It is true that during the height of summer a few attempts were made to replace this stuffy headgear by the lighter and airier straw hat, but the attempts fell rather flat, and exposed the wearers to more attention than was altogether pleasant. For so many years has the appropriate costume for professional men been narrowed down to the black coat and top hat that any variation from this offends the eye. It is entirely a matter of association. This can be shown by reference to the undoubtedly bad effect of a frock-coat and cap for civilians. Yet, strange to say, if the scene be changed and the same combination applied to the uniforms of naval officers, no sense of incongruity remains. It may or may not be the tasteful ornamentation of the latter's get-up that serves to please the eye; suffice it to say that no smarter or more gentlemanly looking object can be named than a well-groomed naval officer.

The top hat, like most other things, was not evolved in a sudden moment of inspiration. It is the product of many centuries' follies and fashions, and, unless we are much mistaken, will for some time outlive the vituperation of those who wear them. Even so far back as the twelfth century, the beaver was worn by the 'nobels of the lande mett at Clarendon.' Felt hats were known long before that, for to St Clement are we indebted for their discovery—a debt which is annually recognised in festivals still held in his honour on November 23. The 'topper' is probably traceable not to his agency, but to the subsequent dealings with the

beavers of the time of the Charles's. The Puritans of the reign of Charles I. adopted lofty steeple crowns, typical perhaps of their soaring aspirations. With these crowns they combined brims of portentous widths, which their best friends could scarcely now contend were typical of their breadth of view. The Cavaliers, on the other hand, by rejecting the steeple crown, symbolised their less lofty principles, and by their yet broader brims adorned with feathers typified more wide and worldly sympathies. So matters ran on until the next step in their evolution was taken in the reign of Charles II. Brims grew broader and broader until the slightest breath of wind disorganised the wearer's headgear altogether. A happy idea then struck some hatter, for he elaborated the device of looping. This simple expedient gave a grand opportunity for the artistic-minded traders of the period, and there consequently ensued all sorts of 'cocks.' The old-fashioned low-crowned beaver, with a broad brim looped up equally on three sides, became the cocked hat which prevailed until comparatively recent times.

After years and years of varied cocking and other alterations in the shapes of the beaver, there came from Florence specimens of silk hats. It would be more correct to say that they came from Paris, for although manufactured in Italy they were exported in the first instance to France. They appear to have taken the British fancy, for the sale increased, and the profits were such as to induce manufacturers to start the business here. Now, as may be imagined, it is an enormous industry, employing in Stockport alone many hundreds of men, women, and children, aided by elaborate and costly machinery. To say that this country alone exports over a million annually to all parts of the world is sufficient to testify both to their quality and quantity. The exports from France will be very considerably greater, for that country has had for many years the lead in supplying an ever-extending market.

The last words are used advisedly, for not only is the demand growing in countries with temperate climates, but the inhabitants of tropical and semi-tropical lands are also adopting them. Twenty or thirty years ago the 'topper' was practically unknown in Argentina, the free and comfortable soft felt hat being found perfectly satisfactory. Nowadays the self-respecting Buenos Airean suffers tortures rather than dispense with his new love. Much the same thing is reported from all quarters of the globe. Where custom or fashion say yes, the individual is rarely able to say no; and where he has the pluck to go on his own way, he will find himself regarded as an eccentric and treated accordingly. So that, whether the top hat is or is not the explanation of the premature baldness so common to our young men, we may safely assume that the date of emancipation is as yet lost in futurity. It took some years to kill the crinoline, which was not one whit more absurd; common sense at last prevailed in that instance, and it is to be hoped that it will ultimately declare itself against such a fragile, unsteady, and absurd invention as the 'topper.' Not only was the adoption of the straw hat during last summer an indication of a healthy revulsion of feeling, but the rejection of the still sillier opera hat, with its complicated closing apparatus, was an additional sign. The soft felt hats seem to answer every requirement for winter use. They are comfortable, warm, light, are not easily blown off, and are, moreover, cheap and lasting; in summer nothing can be cooler than the simple straw. The tyranny of the 'topper' still maintains its power in London, and will die hard, but die it will sooner or later: in the words of the song, 'Let it be soon!'

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

CHAPTER XIV.—THE GENERAL ELECTION.

DESPITE the changes, suppressions, repressions, and new conditions which have been imposed upon the good old election, there is still some excitement left. We may sigh and pine for the brave days when an election lasted six weeks; when everybody marched up valiantly, though clubs were shaken in his face and might be broken over his head; and when he gave his vote openly before all the world; when the people who had no vote contributed their share in the representation of the country by free fights, hustling and belabouring the voters; when drink flowed as freely as when Wat Tyler held the city; when everybody had to take a side, and to behave accordingly; when the chairmen brought their poles, and the sailors brought their clubs, and the butchers brought their marrow bones and cleavers; and all for use and not for mere fashionable display; when none thought shame to take a bribe; when the air was thick with showers of epigrams, libels, and scurrilous accusations; when the Father of Lies held his headquarters, for the time, in the borough; when the whole of a man's record was exposed to view, with trimmings and

additions, and the most ingenious and diabolic perversions of the truth; when the public-houses were open to all electors free, and beer and gin and rum were attainable by the humblest; when every elector knew his value, and proudly appraised himself to its full extent; when the candidates stood upon the hustings, courageously facing showers of dead cats, putrid rabbits, addled eggs, and cabbage-stalks—about a fortnight before an election, all the cats in the country died, and all the dead rabbits became putrid, and all the eggs grew addled, and all the cabbage-stalks became rotten. Thus doth Nature accommodate herself to the ways of man. Those of us who read of the good old days may pine for them; those who have not read of them will find little at the present day to remind them of former customs.

At Shadwell there were none of these things. A fight there was, but only one, as you shall hear. None of the ancient customs were observed; only those humours of an election which still survive were with us; and these are mild.

It was an active time for those who, like me, went electioneering. The papers spoke of nothing else; certainly at our house no one talked of anything else. I suppose that something went on as usual in the yard; but no one heeded the building of boats. Everybody told everybody else that business was completely stopped. That may have been so. In the High Street, however, the cranes on the third floor of the warehouses continued their activity, and the wagons, full and empty, rumbled along the street. They didn't mind the general election, and the ships went in and out of the docks without minding the general election in the least. Also the working-men went backwards and forwards. And they didn't seem to mind the general election in the least. Everybody said, however, that the world thought of nothing else. We made our own racket, I suppose, and thought that all the world was joining in.

And we worked—heavens! how we worked! Of course we were Robert's servants—his slaves, even. He issued commands. At his committee he did not consult his friends; he commanded them. And, of course, everybody obeyed. He ordered me to speak for him in the less eligible districts, and when he was speaking elsewhere. Well, I, who had never before spoken, obediently went to speak. I prepared speeches: I found freedom of speech. I even arrived at some popularity. 'We'd send you to Parliament,' they told me, 'if it wasn't for your cousin.' I harangued on Robert's lines, as zealously as a Party man who hopes for office: I pulled the enemy's addresses and manifestoes to pieces: I showed their abominable inconsistency: their delusive promises: their wicked self-seeking: their shameful ambitions. Oh! the wickedness and the foolishness of the other side! The world will never be righteous, mind you, or generous, or just, till the other side gives up its self-seeking and its pretences. I also manufactured some lampoons which I thought were rather effective. I sent them to Frances, who told me that I ought to be standing in my cousin's place and doing all this

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work for myself. She was good enough, however, to express a hope that so strong a speaker and so vigorous a speaker might get into the House, where, she added, he would very quickly find his own level.

Robert's committee was composed, except for myself, entirely of working-men. The employers and shopkeepers, and a good many of the working-men understood two things only, Liberal or Conservative. Politics must mean one thing or the other. That a candidate should be neither Liberal nor Conservative, but only himself, they could not understand.

Before many days were over I was as much absorbed in the election as Robert himself. I lived altogether at Wapping. We began work early in the morning, at seven, and we ended it at midnight. The committee sat all day long; that is to say, the only man among them who was not a working-man—myself—sat all day long. We issued our candidate's address, which was a bold appeal for election on the ground of knowledge and personal fitness. As for burning questions, we dismissed them. Abolition of the Lords? Not possible. What was the use of discussing for election purposes a question not yet within the reach of the Commons? The Disestablishment of the Church? Whether that would do any good to the people of the country or not was an open question. Meantime, was the measure even possible at the present moment? No. Then why consider it? Was there to be an Eight Hours' Bill? Then there would have to be an eight hours' pay, with reductions, otherwise the employer would be ruined. And so on. The independent candidate would promise nothing, except the support of such measures as he himself, exercising his own judgment, might think calculated to advance the whole community. He said that he would vote for no interest: that he would not needlessly disturb existing institutions: that old things, grown up in the course of centuries, meant things befitting the mind of the people, and so far should be respected. He offered himself as a man who knew things. He reminded the electors that they had heard his addresses, and had learned his views. If they approved of him and his opinions, they would send him to Parliament, where they would find him able, at least, to set the House right on a good many matters of fact.

When one contrasted this address—strong and manly we called it—with the conventional phrases—we called them conventional—of the other candidates, it seemed marvellous—to ourselves—that any one should vote for them at all.

Every evening for four weeks Robert spoke. On Sundays he spoke at the working-men's clubs, in their own club-houses: on Mondays he spoke in such halls and big rooms as can be got in this neighbourhood. It was one evening just before the polling that the fight happened, which has been mentioned above.

We were in the same music hall to which I had brought Frances on a certain memorable occasion. Robert would still have no chairman or committee men on the platform. He stood alone: with some of the committee I was in

the stage-box. Now I observed, when we took our places, a lot of fellows whose faces were unfamiliar to me—yet by this time I knew all Shadwell—they were all standing gathered together in the orchestra. They talked to each other and nodded their heads and stuck elbows in each other, with a good deal of earnestness, as if they designed something; they all carried sticks; and they looked inclined for mischief. Well, at election time there is still something left of the old leaven. It looked to me as if they meant to rush the platform. Robert would be alone there: if these fellows should try to rush it, how would he defend it by himself? I mentioned my suspicions: we resolved to jump down to the stage if there should be any need.

Well, our candidate came on: he was received with a storm of applause—but the men in the orchestra did not applaud: they only whispered and nudged each other. Robert began his address. The company in the orchestra continued to whisper: they did not pretend to listen. After the speaker had gone on for a few minutes, the house became perfectly silent, carried away by the current of the speech flowing full and strong and clear. The voice of the man was magnetic: it would be heard: it recommended silence. Then suddenly one man blew a whistle. Instantly the men in the orchestra, at either end, climbed up on the platform, shouting and brandishing their sticks.

The whole house rose crying 'Down! Down! Off! Off!' And then followed the finest display of physical strength and bravery that I have ever seen. There were at least twenty of them, equally divided. Robert seized the chair beside him, and with this for weapon he fell upon the party on the right, and literally broke the chair to pieces over their heads. We might have leaped down and joined him, but there was no need: the battle was over as soon as it was begun: the assailants fell back one over the other: their heads were broken, their teeth were knocked out, their collar-bones were broken: Robert wielded his chair with the lightning-like dexterity of a skilful player in the olden time who wielded his quarter-staff. It seemed but a moment before the fellows of the right-hand party were down again, broken to pieces, with no more courage for the fray. Robert kicked the last of them over the footlights into the orchestra. He then turned to the second party. But they had seen enough: they were now tumbling over each other to the place whence they came in much greater haste than they had shown to mount the stage. Then Robert stood alone. A streak of blood lay on his white shirt front: it came from his lip, which was cut, but not badly: his table was upset: his water decanter broken: his chair lay about in fragments. And then—oh! I have never heard such a splendid tumult of applause. From every throat it came: from every man and woman present there arose such a storm and rolling, roaring, continuous thunder of applause, as I have never heard before or since. Who is there among us that does not rejoice to see an act of bravery and strength? One man against twenty, and where were all the rest? Again—again—again—will it never stop?

A hand was laid upon my shoulder. I turned quickly. It was Frances.

'I came to hear your orator again,' she whispered. 'But I have seen him as well. George, it was splendid! Oh! The great, strong, brave creature! He must get in. He must!'

Then Robert, advancing to the front, held up his hand for silence, for the people, having tasted blood, wanted more fighting, and were now roaring for the disturbers of the peace to be thrown to the lions; and the ill-advised rushers, caught in a trap of their own making, were looking at each other with rueful countenance, expectant of a troublous five minutes. Imagine the Christian martyrs going to be let out into an arena full of lions, all hungry. And these poor fellows had not, it was clear, the support of faith. They had been paid to make a row and break up the meeting; and now it looked as if they had achieved martyrdom.

Silence obtained, Robert pointed to the orchestra below him. 'I think,' he said, 'that before we go on, these gentlemen had better be removed. If they do not go quietly, I will go down among them myself, with all that is left of the chair. In taking them out, remember that there are perhaps a few ribs and collar-bones broken. Please not to kick the men with the broken bones down the stairs.'

The house roared with joy; the men jumped up and poured to the front. They summoned the rushers to come out of that, or—they promised truly dreadful things as an alternative. But these misguided young men surrendered; they climbed ruefully over the pew; as each descended he was escorted between two of our fellows to the stairs, and then, one had reason to believe, he was assisted down those stairs by strange boots. The unfortunates on whose skulls and ribs the chair had been broken came last, all the conceit out of them, with hanging heads, and the exhibition of pocket-handkerchiefs. They were received with cheers derisive.

'And now,' said Robert, when they were gone, 'let us go back to business.'

And I really believe, so great is the admiration of the crowd for personal bravery and a man who can fight, that this little adventure brought him as many votes as all his speeches. For once the people were presented with evidence conclusive that they really had a very strong man before them.

'I am glad I came,' said Frances, when the meeting was over. 'I never saw a brave man before. Oh! what a thing it must be to be a man! And you go and throw it all away. Take me down, quickly. My carriage is waiting by the door, I believe.'

I led her down the stairs, in the splendid dress which was always part of her, through the people, who made way for her right and left; the poor women with their pinched and shabby shawls, and the working-men in their working-dress.

'You people all!' she said, standing at the top of the staircase, 'I have heard a splendid address to-night, and I have seen a splendid thing. If you don't send that splendid speaker

and that splendid man to the House of Commons, you deserve to be disfranchised.'

'Don't be frightened, lady,' said one of the men, whom I knew to be a rank Socialist. 'We'll send him there fast enough. Especially if you'll come here and speak for him.'

So she got into the carriage and drove off while the crowd shouted after her.

And this was the nearest approach to the old-fashioned humours of an election that we had to show.

When the day of polling arrived, we had no carriages. Robert would not pay for any, and no one offered to lend him any. The carriages of Liberal and Conservative ran about all day long; but our voters had to walk. In the evening they came by companies: among them all the costers of the quarter with their barrows. What made the costers vote for Robert if it was not that very noble battle on the stage?

And when the votes were counted, Robert was head of the poll by 754 votes.

So he had got the desire of his heart, and was a Member of Parliament. He had worked for it for seven years: he had even descended so far as to learn manners, which was at first a very bitter pill. He had trained his voice and taught himself the art of oratory: he had studied economics of all kinds: he was patient, courageous, tenacious, and he was ambitious. What would he do after all this preparation?

PRISON MALINGERING.

It is a very common thing with convicts to sham illness, whether bodily or mental, so as to evade work and get admission to the prison hospital with such comforts as it imparts. This shamming is carried on with a zeal worthy of a better cause, not to speak of the immense ingenuity displayed, the long-sustained and persistent efforts, and the self-torture inflicted, which are out of all proportion to the benefits to be gained. The deception carried on by prisoners in this way for years is said to be often incredible. Such is the experience in all countries of those who have to do with criminals in a state of confinement.

Captain Powell, governor of the Florida convict camp, tells of a convict who had been wounded when attempting to escape. The guard had fired at him, and the bullet struck him in the hips, knocking him head over heels. In time the wound healed, but the man persisted that the leg was entirely paralysed, and went hobbling about on crutches, doing no work at all for the balance of his time—some two years. Captain Powell frequently accused him of shamming, but the prison physician thought otherwise. On the day of the convict's discharge, the governor's judgment was vindicated. The convict made perfectly sure that he was free, then broke both crutches across his knee, and walked away roaring with laughter.

In the English convict prison at Dartmoor, a man met with an injury of a trifling nature by falling against his bed, and was taken to the hospital, complaining of severe pains in the back, and exhibiting all the symptoms of

paralysis of the lower half of the body. He appeared perfectly helpless; pretended that he could not turn in bed without assistance, and was carried daily to the exercise yard. At length—says Captain Harris, the present governor of Portland, and recent governor of Dartmoor, who relates this prison experience—after keeping up this deception for nearly three years, and after every kind of remedy had been tried to alleviate his supposed sufferings, he one day threw down the crutches furnished to him before the astonished doctor, saying: 'There, you may take them; I have had enough of them for the present.' It is added that during the years this imposture lasted, the man was most insolent and abusive to the medical staff, who were doing their best to lighten what was thought to be his afflicted condition.

Another Dartmoor case is that of a convict, the bones of whose foot were believed to be diseased. He was treated with the greatest care for many months, when it was found that he had two large needles bound round with thread embedded in a wound above the instep. The needles were removed and the man at once recovered.

A case showing great cunning and perseverance, as well as tolerance of much self-inflicted pain continued for many months, is worth telling. The convict was most determined and resourceful in his efforts at malingering. He began by running a piece of copper wire into his knee, by which he nearly lost his leg. He then produced a number of sores round the knee-joint, and kept up a great degree of swelling and inflammation by means of rag and thread pushed into the wounds. Upon the discovery of this he took to introducing lime below the skin. On another occasion a bandage was found firmly bound round the man's thigh, the result being, in medical phraseology, 'extensive swelling and lividity of the thigh.' The doctor ordered his limb to be enveloped with a large piece of gutta-percha so as to checkmate the prisoner's malpractices. The latter, however, by means of a strip of sheeting, and the skewer to which part of his dinner was attached, formed a tourniquet, and by it compressed his leg so much during the night as to quite neutralise the medical treatment it had received during the day. The imposture was at length detected by an order of the doctor to expose the limb outside the bed-clothes to the view of the officer by day and night, and from that hour progress was made towards complete recovery.

The ailments most frequently feigned are imbecility, paralysis, fits, spitting of blood, and bleeding from the nose; but a hand or leg retained in a particular position for a length of time, resulting in the loss of the power of again using it, is not uncommon. The late Dr Guy, an eminent authority, mentioned the case of a man who sewed up his mouth and eyelids with a needle and thread with a view to prove his insanity after less violent measures had proved unsuccessful.

Dr Gover, Medical Inspector of Prisons, brings forward several cases of imposture. One remarkable case is that quoted by Dr Smalley, of Parkhurst Prison, in which infiltration of air was

found beneath the skin. Dr Smalley was much perplexed as to how to account for this, when an ordinary safety-pin straightened out was found hidden in the prisoner's mattress. He had punctured his lung with the safety-pin, and so produced the morbid condition in which he was. When he died, another safety-pin was found at the post-mortem examination embedded in the lung tissue. The second was a suspicious case of Bright's disease, which was proved to be caused by artificial means.

Prisoners sometimes attempt to commit suicide; often they fail, but sometimes they succeed. These attempts are frequently timed to meet the keeper's eye, so that the prisoner who has tied himself up by the neck may be cut down on the opportune arrival of the executive officer in charge. As the said officer has not always arrived at the calculated time, 'the event,' in sporting phraseology, has unhappily 'come off,' when it has not been intended. It is not an easy matter to say whether such attempts have been seriously meant or not, but their object is believed to be that of exciting sympathy or attracting attention to the extreme wretchedness of the prisoner's condition, so that some alleviation of his lot may follow. Only a profound psychologist could divine in such circumstances the real motives of prisoners, which too frequently are of the nature of a Chinese puzzle even to experts.

The most determined instance of self-inflicted injury of a suicidal character is recorded by Dr Clarke, a prison surgeon. It appears that during a previous sentence a prisoner had incurred repeated punishment for misconduct. He had feigned insanity in a borough jail; he had affected to be palsied before the judge who tried him; and when condemned to a period of prison seclusion, although he arrived without the least symptom of mental derangement, he soon commenced in prison a course of malingering. He began by the usual methods of destroying books, clothing, bedding, and the glass of the windows. This was followed by the refusal of food, and his abstinence was so persistent that hospital treatment became a necessity. Not only did the prisoner pass through all these well-known stages in the career of malingering, but he added muteness to his other eccentricities; and in order to guard against any new phase in his conduct, he was placed under more constant observation. Whether the restraint of close surveillance became irksome, or whether he despaired of success in his imposture, is a matter rather difficult of solution; but after other symptoms of amendment, he assured the doctor on the day before his death that he had resigned the attempt to feign insanity. All the ordinary precautions to frustrate suicide continued to be taken, and yet on the following night he succeeded in strangling himself by means of a bandage round his neck tied to a looped sheet, in the bight of which he placed his feet, and by extending them tightened the ligature. The act is said to have been unexampled for cunning and determination. He was covered by his bed-clothes; he refrained from making any noise; and although the light of the lamp streamed into his cell, he seemed to the officer on night-

duty, who passed and repassed throughout the livelong night in full view of him, to be sleeping the sleep of the just, while all the time he was silently choking himself to death. The post-mortem held over the prisoner revealed a healthy condition of brain.

Major Griffiths, one of H.M. Inspectors of Prisons, in his very interesting work entitled *Secrets of the Prison House*, tells how an astute malingerer was able at length to baffle the prison medical authorities. The prisoner's name is given as Quex—very probably a pseudonym. This man had been within most of Her Majesty's jails, and his speciality consisted in the manufacture of false keys with which he opened the not too securely fastened doors of labourers and artisans who left home in the small hours of the morning for their work, leaving their wives still asleep in bed. As a consequence he was often caught, and his booty was at all times but scanty. He was full of long-winded, frivolous, groundless reports: 'The food wasn't fit for pigs, the mornin' gruel's that thin! I never saw such skilly as that 'ere. And the soup, sir, it's nothin' but water; and the bread, it's made of musty flour. Look, sir, at this loaf, it's as 'ard as a stone, and it's only baked the night afore.' These were his complaints to Major Griffiths as Inspector of Prisons, who soon saw that the man had kept his bread till it had got hard, all this being contrary to the regulations. The loaf was removed, much to his disgust. His next complaint, made a week or two later on, was that the bread was soft and pulpy. Inquiry showed that he had soaked it in his water-can so as to produce the state in which it was. Another complaint was to the effect that the governor had put him on three days' punishment diet for giving away a loaf to another man. He contended it was against Scripture, because 'it says there that it's more blessed to give than to receive. Blest if I think it's so in this blooming jail!' So much for the facetious side of Quex. His course of imposture must now be told.

The first thing he did was to cultivate what are termed delusions, which ordinarily indicate weakness of intellect. He believed himself innocent, and this idea became fixed in his mind. He then complained of noises in his ears, buzzings which kept him from sleep at night or peace during the day. Next, his food was tampered with; 'things' were put in it; and it was doing him no good; for he was wasting away. The prison doctor was still incredulous, so Quex had to rise to the occasion. He now complained that he was being subjected to electrical shocks. 'The electricity was passed into his body sometimes from a distance; the assistant-surgeon came to his cell door at night and woke him with the electric light, the object was to play upon the nerves of his face and to see inside his brain' if he was innocent, &c. 'So they tried another form of torture, which was to push an instrument up each side of his nose, so as to injure the brain. After that they cut a hole in his nose on each side,' he said to Major Griffiths with the greatest gravity and impressiveness—'and pulled the instrument out of his mouth, and then through his nose again. By this means they

made him breathe bad air, and this affected his brain, and altered what was written there. The doctors were determined to do away with him, he was sure.' He next demanded protection, and asked that publication of his wrongs might be made in the *Times*.

The doctors finally yielded to Quex when he had harped month after month on the same string. He was accordingly certified to be insane, and was handed over to the county asylum authorities. Major Griffiths had the curiosity to inquire about him some time later. 'Quex? Quex? Ah! I remember,' said the asylum superintendent. 'No more mad than you or me. By the way, he escaped—that proved it.'

'His superior cleverness got the better of you.'

'Yes, and of the police. There was a hue and cry for him in the town, and he was all but caught in the street. Met my assistant-surgeon coming one way and the police the other.'

'Well?'

'Quex was equal to the occasion. He went straight up to the police and said, "You are looking for an escaped lunatic, I believe? There he is," and he pointed out the assistant-surgeon, whom the police immediately captured, and Quex got completely away.'

Quex has never been heard of since; but the strangest part of all is that the man's symptoms of feigned insanity were a perfect counterfeit of the real trouble, according to the account given of them by the eminent 'alienist,' Dr Nicholson, superintendent of Broadmoor Asylum.

THE MAHALAPSI DIAMOND.

CHAPTER III.

OTTO STAARBRUCKER was the first witness called. He gave his evidence with great clearness, and conveyed, with consummate skill, the impression of his extreme reluctance and pain at having thus brought his former friend into trouble. Only the natural instinct of self-protection, on behalf of himself and his sister, and the absolute refusal of the prisoner to 'declare' the diamond, had induced him to take the extreme step of informing the authorities. One item, and that an important one, was added to the evidence tendered by him upon the occasion of the prisoner's committal. He had omitted then to state that on two evenings, shortly before his discovery of the diamond in Farnborough's possession, he had seen the prisoner, not far from the house, in earnest conversation with a native. The time was evening, and it was dark, and he was unable to positively identify the 'boy.' This evidence, as was suggested by counsel for the prosecution, tended manifestly to couple the prisoner with a native diamond thief, and thereby to tighten the damning chain of evidence now being wound about him. Staarbrucker suffered it to be extracted from him with an art altogether admirable. He had not mentioned the fact at the former hearing, thinking it of trifling importance. The prosecuting advocate, on the contrary, exhibited it

with manifest care and parade, as a most important link in the case.

This piece of evidence, it may be at once stated, was a piece of pure and infamous invention on Otto's part, an afterthought suggested by seeing Frank once give an order to a native groom. In the hands of himself and a clever advocate it did its work.

In cross-examination, Otto Staarbrucker suffered very little at the hands of the defending advocate, skilful though the latter proved himself. The prisoner's theory (and indeed, perfectly true story) of his, Staarbrucker's, repeated offers of a prospecting partnership, and of his ultimate rage and vexation upon Frank's refusal, he treated with an amused, slightly contemptuous surprise. The man was a finished actor, and resisted all the assaults of counsel upon this and other points of the story with supreme skill and coolness. The touch of sympathy for the prisoner, too, was never lost sight of. Frank Farnborough, as he glared fiercely at this facile villain, reeling off lie after lie with damning effrontery, felt powerless. What could he do or say against such a man? To express the burning indignation he felt, would be but to injure his case the more fatally. With difficulty indeed, while he felt his fingers tingling to be at the slanderer's throat, he restrained himself, as Otto's calm eye occasionally wandered to his, expressing, as plainly as might be for the benefit of all present, its sympathy and sorrow at the unfortunate situation of his former friend.

The next witness called was 'Miss Nina Staarbrucker.' Again there was a manifest sensation. Miss Staarbrucker was well known in Kimberley, and every eye turned in the direction of the door. There was some delay; at length a passage was made through the crowded court, and Nina appeared.

Before she steps into the witness-box it may be well to explain Nina's attitude and feelings from the morning of the day upon which Frank's arrest had been made.

After cooling down somewhat from the paroxysm of rage and revenge, which had impelled him to turn traitor upon his friend, and deliver him into the none too tender hands of the detective authorities, Otto Staarbrucker had suffered a strong revulsion of feeling. He regretted, chiefly for his own ease and comfort, the rash step he had taken, and would have given a good deal to retrace it. But the die was irrevocably cast: having chosen his path, he must perforce follow it.

He was well aware of Nina's friendship—fondness he might call it—for Frank; her sympathy would most certainly be enlisted actively on the young man's behalf immediately upon hearing of his position. At all hazards she must be kept quiet. Shortly before tiffin, he returned to the house. Calling Nina into the sitting-room, he shut the door and sat down.

'Nina,' he said, 'I have some bad news for you. Don't excite yourself, or make a noise, but listen carefully and quietly to what I tell you, and then we'll put our heads together and see what is best to be done.'

Nina turned pale. She feared some news of disaster to Otto's business, which latterly,

as she knew, had been none too flourishing. Otto went on.

'I heard, late last night, from an unexpected quarter, that the detective people had an inkling of an unregistered diamond in this house. You know very well what that means. I went to Frank Farnborough both late last night and early this morning. I begged and entreated him, for his own sake, for all our sakes, to go at once first thing this morning and hand over and declare the stone. This he refused to do, and in a very insulting way. I had no other course open for my own safety and yours, but to give the information myself. I am afraid matters have been complicated by the discovery that the diamond is a De Beer's stone, undoubtedly stolen. Frank is in a temporary mess, but we shall be able to get him out of the difficulty somehow.'

Nina had uttered a low cry of pain at the beginning of this speech. She knew too well the danger, and, as Otto went on, her heart seemed almost to stand still within her.

'Oh,' she gasped, 'what is to be done? What shall we do? I must see Frank at once. Surely an explanation from us both should be sufficient to clear him?' She rose as she spoke.

'My dear Nina; first of all we must do nothing rash. We shall no doubt be easily able to get Frank out of this trouble. The thing is, of course, absurd. He has been a little rash—as indeed we all have—that is all. For the present you must leave everything to me. I don't want to have your name dragged into the matter even for a day. If there is any serious trouble, you shall be consulted. Trust to me, and we shall make matters all right.'

By one pretext or another, Otto managed to keep his sister quiet, and to allay her worst fears, until two days after, by which time Frank had been sent for trial and was safely in prison. Nina had meanwhile fruitlessly endeavoured to possess her soul in patience. When Otto had come in that evening and told her of the news. 'Why was I not called in evidence,' she asked fiercely. 'Surely I could have done something for Frank. You seem to me to take this matter—a matter of life and death—with very extraordinary coolness. I cannot imagine why you have not done more. You know Frank is as innocent as we are ourselves. We ought to have moved heaven and earth to save him this dreadful degradation. What—what can he think of me? I shall go to-morrow and see his solicitors and tell them the whole of the facts!'

Next morning, Nina read an account of the proceedings in the newspaper. It was plainly apparent, from the report of Otto's evidence, that there was something very wrong going on. She taxed her brother with it.

'My dear Nina, be reasonable,' he said. 'Of course Frank has got into a desperate mess. I was not going to give myself away, because I happened to know, innocently, that he had an unregistered diamond for two or three days in his possession. I have since found out that Frank knew a good deal more of the origin of that diamond than I gave him credit for, and it was my plain duty to protect myself.'

This was an absolute fabrication, and Nina more than half suspected it.

'But you were trying to make arrangements with Frank to prospect the very place the stone came from,' said the girl.

'I admit that, fully,' replied Otto calmly. 'But I never then suspected that the diamond was stolen. I imagined it was innocently come by. It was foolish, I admit, and I am not quite such an idiot, after giving the information I did, to own now that I was prepared to go in for a speculation with Frank upon the idea of the diamond being an up-country one. Now, clearly understand me, not a word must be said upon this point, or you may involve me in just such a mess as Frank is in.'

Nina was fairly bewildered, and held her peace. Matters had taken such astounding turns. The diamond, it seemed after all, was a stolen one, and a De Beer's stone to boot; she knew not what to think, or where to turn for guidance and information. And yet, something must be done to help Frank.

For the next few days, the girl moved about the house like a ghost, seldom speaking to her brother, except to give the barest replies to his scant remarks.

Several times she was in a mind to go straight to Frank's solicitor and tell her version of the whole affair. But then, again, there were many objections to such a course. She would be received with great suspicion, as an informer from an enemy's camp. After almost insufferable doubts and heartaches, Nina judged it best to wait until the day of trial, and then and there to give her version of the affair as she knew it. Surely the judge would give ear to a truthful and unprejudiced witness, anxious only to save an honest and cruelly misused man! Surely, surely Frank could and would be saved!

About a week before the trial, she was subpoenaed as a witness on behalf of both prosecution and defence, and finally, the day before the terrible day, Otto had a long interview with her upon the subject of her evidence. Her proof he himself had carefully prepared and corrected with the prosecuting solicitor; excusing his sister upon the ground of ill-health and nervousness, but guaranteeing her evidence at the trial. He now impressed upon her, with great solemnity and anxiety, the absolute necessity of her story coinciding precisely with his own. Nina listened in a stony silence and said almost nothing. Otto was not satisfied, and expressed himself so.

'Nina,' he said sharply, 'let us clearly understand one another. My tale is simple enough, and after what has occurred—the finding of a stolen diamond and not an innocent stone from up-country—I cannot conceal from myself that Frank must be guilty. You must see this yourself. Don't get me into a mess, by any dangerous sympathies, or affections, or feelings of that sort. Be the sensible, good sister you always have been, and, whatever you do, be careful; guard your tongue and brain in court, with the greatest watchfulness. Remember, my reputation—your brother's reputation—is at stake, as well as Frank's!'

Nina dared not trust herself to say much.

Her soul sickened within her; but, for Frank's sake, she must be careful. Her course on the morrow was fully made up. She replied to Otto: 'I shall tell my story as simply and shortly as possible. In spite of what you say, I know, and you must know, that Frank is perfectly innocent. I know little about the matter, except seeing Frank with the diamond in his hand that night. You may be quite content. I shall not injure you in any way.'

Otto Staarbrucker was by no means satisfied with his sister's answer, but it was the best he could get out of her. He could not prevent—it was too late now—her being called as a witness. Come what might, she was his sister and never would, never could, put him into danger.

At last the time had come. Nina made her way, with much difficulty, to the witness-box; steadily took her stand and was sworn. All Kimberley, as she knew, was looking intently and watching her every gesture. She had changed greatly in the last few weeks, and now looked, for her, thin and worn—almost ill. The usual warmth of her dark beauty was lacking. Only an ivory pallor was in her face; but her glorious eyes were firm, open and determined, and honesty and truth, men well might see, were in her glance. She looked once quickly at the two judges and the magistrate sitting with them, and then her eyes met Frank's, and for him a world of sympathy was in them. It did Frank good and he breathed more freely. Nina, at all events, was the Nina of old.

The prosecuting advocate opened the girl's evidence quietly, with the usual preliminaries. Then very gently he asked Nina if she was well acquainted with the prisoner. Her reply was, 'Yes, very well acquainted.'

'I suppose,' continued counsel, 'I may even call him a friend of yours?'

'Yes,' replied Nina, 'a very great friend.'

'Without penetrating unduly into your private affairs and sympathies, Miss Staarbrucker,' went on the advocate, 'I will ask you to tell the court shortly what you actually saw on the night in question—the night, I mean, when the diamond was first seen by yourself and your brother.'

Here was Nina's opportunity, and she took advantage of it. She told plainly, yet graphically, the story of that evening; she portrayed the amazed delight of Frank on the discovery of the stone, his free avowal of his find; the knife in his hand; the open crocodile on the table; the pebbles previously taken from the reptile's stomach. She went on with her story with only such pauses as the taking of the judge's notes required. Counsel, once or twice, attempted to pull her up; she was going much too fast and too far to please him; but the court allowed her to complete her narrative. She dealt with the next two days. Mr Farnborough had kept the diamond, it was true. He was puzzled to know what to do with it. He had, finally, announced his intention of giving it up and declaring it, and he would undoubtedly have done so, but for his arrest. The stone might have been stolen, or it might not, but Mr Farnborough, as all his friends

knew, was absolutely incapable of stealing diamonds, or of buying diamonds, knowing them to be stolen. The stone came into his possession in a perfectly innocent manner, as she could and did testify on oath. As for her brother's suspicions, she could not answer for or understand them. For two days, he at all events had had none; she could not account for his sudden change. Spite of the judge's cautions, she concluded a breathless little harangue—for she had let herself go completely now—by expressing her emphatic belief in Frank's absolute innocence.

She had finished, and in her now deathly pale beauty was leaving the box. There were no further questions asked by counsel upon either side. Nina had said far too much for the one, and the advocate for the defence judged it wiser to leave such a runaway severely alone. Who knew in what direction she might turn next? He whispered regretfully to his solicitor: 'If we had got hold of that girl, by George! we might have done some good with her—with a martingale and double bit on.'

The senior judge, as Nina concluded, remarked blandly—for he had an eye for beauty—'I am afraid we have allowed you a good deal too much latitude, Miss Staarbrucker, and a great deal of what you have told the court is quite inadmissible as evidence.'

As for Otto, he had stared with open mouth and fixed glare at his sister during her brief episode. He now heaved a deep breath of relief, as he watched the judges.

'Thank God!' he said to himself savagely under his breath, 'she has overdone it, and spoilt her own game—the little fool!'

Nina moved to her seat and sat now faint and dejected, watching with feverish eyes for the end.

The case for the prosecution was soon finished. Three witnesses, experts of well-known reputation and unimpeachable character, testified to the fact that the stone was a De Beer's stone, and by no possibility any other. Evidence was then put in proving conclusively that the diamond was unregistered.

Counsel for the defence had but a poor case, but he made the best of it. He dwelt upon the unimpeachable reputation of the prisoner, of the utter improbability of his having stolen the diamond, or bought it, knowing it to be stolen. There was not a particle of direct evidence upon these points. The evidence of experts was never satisfactory. Their evidence in this case was mere matter of opinion. It was well known that the history of gold and gem finding exceeded in romance the wildest inspirations of novelists. The finding of the first diamond in South Africa was a case very much in point. Why should not the diamond have come from the Mahalapsi River with the other gravel in the belly of the dead crocodile? Mr Farnborough's friend, Mr Kentburn, would prove beyond doubt that he had brought the mummified crocodile from the Mahalapsi River, where he had picked it up. The greatest offence that could by any possibility be brought home to his client was that he had this stone in his possession for two days without declaring it! That was an act of sheer inadvertence.

The stone was not a Griqualand West stone, and it was a puzzling matter, with a young and inexperienced man, to know quite what to do with it. If the stone were, as he, counsel, contended, not a stone from the Cape districts at all, it was an arguable question whether the court had any rights or jurisdiction in this case whatever. Would it be contended that a person coming to South Africa, innocently, with a Brazilian or an Indian diamond in his possession, could be hauled off to prison, and thereafter sentenced for unlawful possession? Such a contention would be monstrous! The great diamond industry had in South Africa far too much power already—many men thought. Let them be careful in further stretching or adding to those powers—powers that reminded unbiassed people more of the worst days of the Star Chamber or the Inquisition, than of a modern community. Had the prisoner attempted to conceal the diamond? On the contrary, he had shown it eagerly to Mr Staarbrucker and his sister immediately he had found it. That was not the act of a guilty man!

These, and many other arguments, were employed by the defending advocate in a powerful and almost convincing speech. There were weak points, undoubtedly—fatally weak, many of the spectators thought them. These were avoided, or lightly skated over with consummate art. The advocate closed his speech by a touching appeal that a young, upright, and promising career might not be wrecked upon the vaguest of circumstantial evidence.

The speech was over; all the witnesses had been called; the speeches concluded. The afternoon was wearing on apace, and the court was accordingly adjourned; the prisoner was put back into jail again, and the crowded assemblage flocked into the outer air, to discuss hotly throughout the rest of the evening the many points of this singular and absorbing case.

JUMPING BEANS.

By G. CLARKE NUTTALL, B.Sc.

A NEW botanical curiosity of a very interesting and unique character has lately been brought into notice in England under the name of 'A Jumping Bean.' This so-called 'bean,' when placed on a flat surface, hops continually up and down, and moves by a series of jerks for considerable distances. There is apparently no end or limit to these movements. Given a certain warmth, and a certain amount of sunlight, these curious little objects will perform with unceasing and untiring activity for months together.

Each bean is about the size of a cherry-stone, and of a somewhat peculiar shape. If we imagine an orange cut into three equal and similar pieces, we have in each piece a fair representation, though on a greatly enlarged scale, of a 'jumping bean.' Each bean has three sides; one, convexly curved, corresponding to the rind of the orange piece, and characterised by a smooth, dark-brown surface; the other two are flat surfaces of a pale straw

colour, the ridge in which they meet being broken by an elliptical yellowish mark. One may, somewhat fancifully perhaps, term the convex side, which is much the largest of the three, the 'back' of the bean. It is apparently a matter of indifference to the bean on which side it lies. It will hop and jump equally well on its back as on either of the two flat surfaces.

These beans were first introduced to the notice of the Royal Botanical Society in November 1894, and afterwards a number of them were exhibited and sold at the late Indian Exhibition, Earlscourt, where their antics provoked much interest and amusement. Indeed, a large metal tray covered with brown beans, all dancing as if endowed with life, is an unusual and surprising sight. It may be interesting to some to know that the small case of beans brought over to the exhibition was insured for sixty pounds. Although they appear to be new to England, they seem to have been sold as a novelty in the Southern States of North America for some little time past.

The jumping beans are really the seed-vessels of a Mexican tree, a tree said to be peculiar to that part of the world. It is stated that this tree has each fruit made up of three carpels, which at first are adherent, the fruit then being about the size of a nut and rounded like an orange. As it matures, however, the carpels split asunder and are dispersed singly. Although all three carpels are of similar appearance, it is asserted, correctly or not, that only one of the three is a *jumping* bean.

If one of the beans be cut in half to investigate the cause of the movement, it is found to be a hollow shell with a light-brown membranous lining, containing a yellowish-white grub, about half an inch in length. The grub is made up of some eleven or twelve segments, and is further furnished with sixteen legs. It is evidently the initiator of the movements, and proves to be the larva of a moth, known as *Carpocapsa saltitans*. How the larva became enclosed does not appear at first sight, for there is not the slightest sign of any hole or puncture in the smooth shining brown surface of the bean. The only possible explanation is, that the moth chose the flower of this particular tree in which to deposit its eggs, and carefully laid them inside the young carpels before the flower withered and the seeds matured. While the carpels were increasing in size after the fertilisation and subsequent fading of the flower, the eggs hatched, and the grub developed within the seed-vessel, and found food for life and growth in the provision the plant had there made for its own offspring. The voraciousness of the prisoner would account for the absolute emptiness of the bean shell when opened later in the season.

Something similar to this occurs in the case of a certain night-fly, *Pronuba Yuccasella*, which places its eggs in the seed-case of the young Yucca flowers, so that the larvæ, when developing, may eat and thrive upon the immature seeds.

Again, we often find that an apple, apparently sound and whole on the outside, harbours a grub at the core—the larva of the codlin moth,

a moth of the same order as the one in question, and this, too, has been shown to be developed *in situ* from eggs laid months before in the apple blossom.

But, of course, in neither of these instances is there any resulting movement, and, after all, it is their jumping which invests these seed-vessels with such peculiar interest. The motion possesses certain interesting characteristics. If a bean is disturbed by being moved or shaken, it will remain quiescent for a few moments, as if recovering from a shock; but soon a slight movement may be perceived, and this is followed up immediately by a series of jerks upwards and onwards. Then a short pause ensues, as if the bean were gathering strength for a fresh effort, which results in another series of, perhaps, even still more vigorous jumps. During a jump a bean may turn completely over from a side on to its back, and during a second again from its back on to a side. It is most amusing to watch a succession of these somersaults. When very vigorous, a bean may leap a couple of inches into the air, and even a comparatively sluggish one traversed by little jerks more than half a yard in half an hour. The distances which a bean can travel during several months must therefore be very considerable. For the movements to be continued with any degree of energy, it is necessary to keep the beans in a warm, light place, and to expose them to direct sunlight for some little time every day. As winter approaches and the temperature grows colder, the beans become more sluggish. This points to a tropical or semi-tropical habitat; but energy may be restored by holding them in a warm hand, or placing them on a warm plate. When in the hand a curious pulsation may be distinctly felt, even when there is no actual movement. Extremes of heat and cold have a pernicious effect upon the worm and eventually kill it.

It is not easy to explain in what way the grub effects these movements. A circular issued at the Indian Exhibition, setting forth the marvellous nature of the beans, asserted: 'The movement of the bean is fascinating, it contradicts the law of gravitation, for while seated in its own house, it can move both itself and its house miles away.' This statement, of course, must be received with a very considerable grain of scientific salt. Probably each jerk or jump is occasioned by the worm drawing itself together, and then suddenly elongating and pressing with either its head or its tail on the walls of its cage. The internal cavity of the bean is considerably larger than the grub within, and affords ample room for any such movement. In the same way, a man standing in a light wooden cage could lift the cage off the ground by jumping up and striking the roof with his hands or head. According to the point struck on the shell, so would be the direction of the jump. If this hypothesis be true, it would explain the movement without any violation of the great principle of gravitation, or yet of Newton's law that action and reaction are equal and opposite. The grub would obtain the momentum for the spring by pressing first on the floor of its cell. It is, however, very difficult to verify any hypothesis on the matter, for should the bean

be opened for examination, the worm no longer attempts to produce movement. Indeed, if only a slight opening is made, the worm immediately betakes itself to the task of filling it up again with a fine silky web, and not until it has completed this work, does it resume its jumping.

But if the method of the movement is somewhat obscure, the reason of it—the object to be attained by it—is still more so. It has been suggested that the worm instinctively sets out on its travels in order that it may escape from any enemies that may be lurking about the place of its birth. This supposition, however, is open to one great objection. The dark-brown beans, if lying quietly on the ground, might escape the notice of birds on the lookout for food; but this can be no longer possible when they indulge in active movement, for the continuous hopping must be the very thing to attract the observation of inimical species. The shell protects its occupant to a certain extent, but it is scarcely hard enough to resist a determined attack by the larger kinds of birds. An alternative supposition suggests itself. Is it possible that the movement may be due to the same instinct that, in the vegetable kingdom, leads the parent plant to make often such elaborate arrangements for the scattering of its progeny, as, for instance, by wings attached to the seeds—that same instinct which, in the higher animals, leads their young to adventure themselves in fresh districts or countries—the instinct, in fact, that foresees and combats the terrible evil of overcrowding, and by increasing the area of distribution promotes the propagation of the species? Until, however, we know more of the environment in which the bean is produced, and more, especially, of the life and habits of the animals—birds, beasts, and reptiles—which co-exist with it, we can but speculate idly on the probable idea that Nature has worked out in producing this curious ‘jumping bean.’

MR SOWERBY'S PLOT.

CHAPTER III.—THE WEDDING DAY.

As Aunt Bridget had already been written to, it was thought better that Clare should pay the promised visit; and indeed the poor girl was in such wretched spirits that she looked forward to the solitude of Ballykilbeg as a relief. She cared nothing about her trousseau; for the more she thought of her marriage, the more she shrank from it. And another advantage of going to Ireland was that she would be out of the way of Mr Sowerby's visits.

Aunt Bridget received her grand-niece with little show of affection, but a good deal of the reality. She was a spare old lady, with a skin like satin, and small curls of white hair at her temples. In manner she was brusque; but her bright dark eyes could be very soft and tender.

Claribel had not been long at Ballykilbeg before she made up her mind to tell her aunt the truth about the approaching marriage. She did not, however, disclose any of her father's secrets, but merely intimated that it was very

much for her father's interest that she should marry Mr Sowerby.

‘Sowerby!’ exclaimed the old lady, looking up with a start as the name passed her niece's lips.

‘Do you know him, auntie?’

‘Me? No, child. How should I know any London gentleman? I heard of a person of that name not long ago—that's all.—And you don't like him very much? He is older than you, you say? That wouldn't signify if you really cared for him. Well, well! You have been a good daughter, Clare; though perhaps’—

Alas! Clare knew very well that her aunt was going to have said what she had said to herself more than once lately—that she had made a mistake—that she had been wrong to make the promise she did.

‘You've given your word,’ said Miss O'Feely, after some reflection; ‘and you tell me this Mr Sowerby has performed his part of the bargain, so you can't in honour draw back; and there's no more to be said. Let us hope it will turn out better than we expect.’ And with this very feeble attempt at consolation, Aunt Bridget rose hastily and left the room.

Next day brought Claribel letters, one from her mother, and one from her future husband. Somewhat to her surprise, Aunt Bridget asked whether she might see the one from Mr Sowerby. ‘I know there are no love secrets between you, my dear; and I want to find out what your Mr Sowerby is like: one can often form a very good opinion of a man's disposition from his letters,’ she added, with a sagacious nod.

As there was nothing of importance in the epistle, Clare handed it over for inspection at once, and did not think about it again till she sat down next day to answer it, when, after hunting in vain for a few minutes, she remembered what she had done, and got it back from her aunt.

Another letter followed in two or three days' time, and this also Aunt Bridget expressed a wish to see. The old lady's innocent curiosity was gratified; the letter was returned to its owner, answered, and thrust away somewhere with its predecessor. Other letters came, but these Aunt Bridget did not care to look at.

Clare had delayed as long as possible her preparations for leaving Ballykilbeg, and was greatly cheered when, on the very eve of her departure, Miss O'Feely announced that she would accompany her niece to London, and be present at the marriage ceremony.

‘Will you really, Aunt Bridget?’ exclaimed the girl.

‘Yes; and I may bring you a wedding gift such as you don't expect,’ said the old lady.

This speech had reference to some talk that had passed between the two as to what form Miss O'Feely's wedding gift to her niece was to take; but Clare, who had a child's simple faith in her aunt's resourcefulness, chose to construe it as a sort of hint that Aunt Bridget might help her in some way to escape from her impending fate. To this idea, however, Miss O'Feely would give no direct encouragement; she either ignored her niece's questions, or gave them an equivocal reply.

The two ladies left Ballykilbeg, and travelled together as far as Liverpool. There Miss O'Feely left her niece, saying that she had some business to attend to in that town, but would follow her to London, and certainly arrive in time for the wedding.

The 7th of September, the day fixed for the ceremony, happened to be a Tuesday. Claribel had reached home on the preceding Friday; and she expected that her aunt would make her appearance next day. Saturday came and went, however, Sunday also, and Monday, yet Aunt Bridget neither came in person, nor wrote, nor sent so much as a telegram to explain her absence. There was one hope left. Miss O'Feely might travel by night, and arrive in the morning in time—in time for what? To witness the ceremony? What good would that do?

Clare burst into tears—a very little made the poor girl cry now—partly because her aunt had not come, partly because she could not give the slightest reason for the hope that she was now forced to abandon.

Tuesday morning dawned, fair and clear, but it brought no Aunt Bridget. The bridal party set out for the church; and surely never did a whiter face than Clare's appear under a crown of orange blossoms. Mr Sowerby was there, of course; and Mr Buddicombe thought that he must be an older man than he had always supposed him to be: his hair looked as if it were not altogether innocent of dye. There were not many invited guests; for the bride had insisted on a semi-private ceremony; yet there was a fair sprinkling of people in front of the altar.

While the clergyman was putting on his surplice, Mr Buddicombe took his future son-in-law into the empty choir-vestry, and said in a hoarse whisper: 'That bill—have you got it about you?'

'Yes; of course.'

'Let me see it.'

'Let you tear it up, you mean? Certainly, after the wedding, my dear sir.'

'How am I to know that you will keep faith with me, then?'

'Because I shall then be your son-in-law. If I give you the bill now, there is nothing to prevent your charming daughter and you from walking out of the church and leaving me.'

The banker ground his teeth in silent rage, and pointed to the door that led to the church. Mr Sowerby bowed, and passed through it, still smiling.

The Rector, a white-haired, smooth-shaven, pink-faced gentleman, who looked like an elderly cherub, was already at the altar. The bride and bridegroom fell into their places, and the service began.

The bridegroom had 'plighted his troth,' and the bride was about to repeat, with trembling lips, the corresponding words for her part, when a commotion was heard at the other end of the church, and a small female figure was seen hurrying up the middle aisle. Two commonplace-looking men had followed her into the church, but slipped into a pew near the door, and showed no signs of coming nearer.

'Stop! stop!' cried Aunt Bridget (for it was no other) when she arrived at the altar steps.

'What is this unseemly disturbance?' demanded the Rector, his red face becoming yet redder as he spoke.

Miss O'Feely paid no attention to him, but beckoning to the two men who had followed her into the church, and now came slowly forward, pointed with her parasol to the bridegroom and said, 'That is the man.'

'I don't like arrestin' anybody in church,' said one of the men. 'It's not been in my experience, and I'm not sure if it's legal. We'll wait for the gentleman outside.'

'Do you mean to tell me that you hold a warrant for this person's arrest?' cried the Rector, pointing to the bridegroom.

'We do, sir, if his name happens to be George Sowerby,' said the man.

The clergyman glanced at the name written on a slip of paper he held in his Prayer-book, closed the book, and without a word, marched off into the vestry by a side-door.

The two men moved up behind Sowerby.

'I don't know what you mean!' cried the bridegroom, in a blaze of fury. 'I know nothing about any summons. In any case, the marriage must go on.—Call back that fool of a parson,' he said savagely. 'Tell him that it is his duty to go on with the ceremony; and if he refuses to do his duty, it will be the worse for him.'

Nobody seemed inclined to execute this command; and Sowerby, from his place at the altar rails, could see the Rector in the act of throwing off his surplice.

With a cry of rage, the disappointed man dropped Claribel's hand, and rushed into the vestry. In another moment the two detectives had followed him; and then some one shut the vestry door. Claribel never saw George Sowerby again.

Meanwhile, two other persons had entered the church. One was Mr Alfred Moulton, late editor of *Financial Echoes*; the other, a tall woman in widow's dress, wearing a crape veil.

'I don't understand how all this has come about, Bridget,' said Mr Buddicombe; 'but if you have saved my daughter from marrying that man, may God bless you!'

'Humph!' grunted Miss O'Feely, with a look of contempt, which the banker felt like a blow.

'Tell me who the prosecutor is,' said Mr Buddicombe as they passed out of the church. She pointed to Alfred Moulton; and Mr Buddicombe drew him aside. He was anxious about the bill of exchange which was still in Sowerby's possession; and Mr Moulton advised him at once to see the chief commissioner of police and explain that no value had ever been given for the bill. The banker took this advice; and though he could not recover the document, he had the satisfaction of knowing that he would never be called upon to pay for it. The bill became the permanent property of the police department, and is never likely to again change hands.

On the way home from church, Miss O'Feely explained how she had been able to intervene

so decisively at the last moment. One of her old friends, a Mrs Fisher, who had been recently left a widow, was in very straitened circumstances through the rapacity of a money-lender named Sowerby, whom Miss O'Feely had little difficulty in identifying as her niece's intended husband. As the result of her visit to England, Miss O'Feely discovered that Sowerby was a greater rascal than had been supposed. He had managed by a clever forgery to lay hold of the two thousand pounds for which his client Fisher, the widow's late husband, had been insured. It happened that Mr Moulton, late proprietor of *Financial Echoes*, had been an intimate friend of Mr Fisher. Mr Moulton had taken the two ladies to a lawyer, by whose investigations a forgery was discovered. A warrant was applied for on the day before the wedding, but Sowerby had disappeared. His intention, no doubt, had been to leave England as soon as he had secured his bride, and then force his father-in-law to give him an allowance by threatening to discount the bill of exchange. This plan would have succeeded, had it not been that Miss O'Feely was able to give Mr Moulton the all-important information that George Sowerby would be found at a certain church in Kensington next morning. She made a mistake, however, with regard to the hour—a mistake which luckily did not prove fatal.

Miss O'Feely made a prolonged stay in London. She soon learned from Claribel some interesting facts concerning a certain Bernardo Rolfini, Professor of Music, and she expressed a wish to know that young man. He was introduced to her at a concert one afternoon, and impressed the old lady so favourably, that she actually gave him an invitation to Ballykilbeg. And when one remembers that the whole family—including Mr Buddicombe—look on Miss O'Feely as Clare's preserver, and as one entitled to dispose of her with a more than paternal authority, one feels certain that Rolfini—a very honest fellow, though an Italian, as Aunt Bridget puts it—has some solid foundation for the glorious cloud-built castle in which he is now living.

GESOPPA FALLS.

THESE, the most famous falls in India, are situated on the Siruvatti (or *Sharavati*) River, which at that part of its course forms the boundary between the north-west corner of the native state of Mysore and the Bombay Presidency. The source of the river is in Mysore, half-way up Koda Chadri, a hill about five thousand feet high, near the famous old town of Nuggur, once the seat of the Rajahs of Mysore, where are still to be seen the ruins of an old fort and palace, and the walls of the town, eight miles in circumference.

The natives have a legend that the god Rama shot an arrow from his bow on to Koda Chadri, and that the river sprang from the spot where the arrow fell, and hence the name Siruvatti or 'arrow-born.' From its source the river flows north for nearly thirty miles through the heart of the Western Ghats, and then

turns west and flows down through the jungles of North Canara to the Indian Ocean—another thirty miles. Shortly after taking the bend westwards there comes the fall, which, on account of its height, is worthy of being reckoned amongst the great waterfalls of the world. Here, at one leap, the river falls eight hundred and thirty feet; and as, at the brink, it is about four hundred yards wide, there are few, if any, falls in the world to match it.

During the dry weather the river comes over in four separate falls, but in the height of the monsoon these become one, and as at that time the water is nearly thirty feet deep, the sight must be truly one of the world's wonders. It has been calculated that in flood-time more horse-power is developed by the Gersoppa Falls than by Niagara. This of course is from the much greater height of Gersoppa, eight hundred and thirty feet against about one hundred and sixty feet of Niagara, although the Niagara Falls are much wider and vaster in volume. The Kaieteur Falls of the Essequibo in British Guiana are seven hundred and forty-one feet sheer and eighty-eight more of sloping cataract, but the river there is only one hundred yards wide. At the Victoria Falls, the Zambesi, one thousand yards wide, falls into an abyss four hundred feet deep.

A friend and I visited the falls in the end of September, about a month after the close of the monsoon, when there were four falls with plenty of water in them. The dry weather is the best for the sight-seer, as, during the monsoon, the rain is so heavy and continuous that there would not be much pleasure in going then, although doubtless the sight would be grander and more awe-inspiring. The drainage area above the falls is seven hundred and fifty square miles, and the average yearly rainfall over this tract is two hundred and twenty inches, nearly the whole of which falls in the three monsoon months, June, July, August; so it can be imagined what an enormous body of water comes down the river in these months. There is a bungalow for the use of visitors on the Bombay side of the river, about a hundred yards away from the falls, built on the very brink of the precipice overhanging the gorge through which the river flows after taking the leap. So close to the edge is it that one could jump from the veranda sheer into the bed of the river nearly a thousand feet below.

The four falls are called 'The Rajah,' 'The Roarer,' 'The Rocket,' and 'La Dame Blanche.' The 'Rajah' and 'Roarer' fall into a horseshoe-shaped cavern, while the 'Rocket' and 'La Dame Blanche' come over where the precipice is at right angles to the flow of the river, and are very beautiful falls. The 'Rajah' comes over with a rush, shoots clear out from the rock, and falls one unbroken column of water the whole eight hundred and thirty feet. The 'Roarer' comes rushing at an angle of sixty degrees down a huge furrow in the rock for one hundred and fifty feet, making a tremendous noise, then shoots right out into the middle of the horseshoe, and mingles its waters with those of the 'Rajah' about half-way down. The

'Rocket' falls about two hundred feet in sheer descent on to a huge knob of rock, where it is dashed into spray, which falls in beautiful smoky rings, supposed to resemble the rings formed by the bursting of rockets. 'La Dame Blanche,' which my friend and I thought the most beautiful, resembles a snow-white muslin veil falling in graceful folds, and clothing the black precipice from head to foot.

From the bungalow a fine view is got of the 'Rocket' and 'La Dame Blanche,' and when the setting sun lights up these falls and forms numerous rainbows in the spray, it makes an indescribably beautiful scene. Here one is alone with Nature, not a house or patch of cultivation anywhere. In front is the river, and all around are the mountains and primeval forests, while the ceaseless roar of the waterfall adds a grandeur and solemnity not easily described.

Near where the 'Rajah' goes over is a projecting rock called the Rajah's Rock, so named because one of the Rajahs of Nuggur tried to build a small pagoda on it, but, before being finished, it was washed away. The cutting in the rock for the foundations is still visible. To any one who has a good head, a fine view of the horseshoe cavern can be had from this rock. The plan is to lie down on your stomach, crawl to the edge, and look over, when you can see straight down into the pool where the waters are boiling and seething nearly a thousand feet below. I took a few large stones to the edge and dropped them over, but they were lost to view long before they reached the bottom. It was quite an appreciable time after my losing sight of them before I observed the faint splash they made near the edge of the pool.

In order to get to the foot of the falls it is necessary to cross the river to the Mysore side, as there is no possibility of getting down on the Bombay side. About half a mile above the falls there is a canoe, dug out of the trunk of a tree, which belongs to the native who looks after the bungalow, and ferries people across. A path has been made to enable visitors to get to the foot of the falls, and many fine views of all four are got while descending. The first half of the way down is fairly easy, but after that the track is a succession of steps down great boulders and across slabs of rock, rendered as slippery as ice by the constant spray. Ere my friend and I reached the bottom we were soaking wet, and realised when too late that we should have left the greater part of our clothes behind us. By going to the bottom a much better idea of the immense height of the falls is got, and the climb up again helps still more to make one realise it. From the bungalow the largest rocks in the bed of the river looked like sheep; but we found them to be huge boulders, ten and twelve feet high and about twenty feet across.

The falls seem to have become known to Europeans about 1840, but were very seldom visited in those days. Even now the number of visitors is small, as the nearest railway is eighty miles off, and there is no way of procuring supplies with the exception of a little

milk and a chicken, to be had from the above-mentioned native. Everything else must be carried with you.

For a good many years there was great uncertainty about the height of the falls, but the question was finally set at rest by two naval lieutenants who plumbed them in 1857. The *modus operandi* was as follows: Their ship being off the coast near the mouth of the river, they got a cable transported to the falls, and stretched it across the horseshoe—a distance of seventy-four yards. Having seen that the cable was properly secured at both ends, they got a cage fixed on, and one of them got into it and was hauled out until he was in the centre. From the cage he let down a sounding line with a buoy attached to the end of it, and found the depth to the surface of the water to be eight hundred and thirty feet. After satisfactorily accomplishing this feat, they proceeded to the foot of the falls, and constructed a raft so as to plumb the pools, which they did, and found the greatest depth to be one hundred and thirty-two feet. This was done near the end of the dry weather, when there was very little water in the river, and they were able to temporarily divert the 'Rajah' and 'Roarer' into the 'Rocket,' without doing which it would have been impossible to plumb the horseshoe pool—the deepest one—satisfactorily.

About a mile from the bungalow is a hill called Nishani Goodda or Cairn Hill, from the top of which a magnificent view of the surrounding country is got. To the east lie the tablelands of the Deccan and Mysore, the flat expanse broken here and there by an occasional hill. North and south stretches the chain of the Ghauts, rising peak after peak as far as the eye can see (Koda Chadri, where the Siruvatti rises, being very conspicuous); while to the west one looks down on the lowlands of jungle-covered Canara, with glimpses of the river here and there, and beyond them gleams the Indian Ocean.

The bungalow book in which visitors inscribe their names is very interesting reading. The records go back to 1840, and many travellers have written a record of what they did when there; while a few, inspired by the scene, have expressed their feelings in poetry, some of it well worth copying and preserving by any one who has seen the falls.

A STUDY IN RAGS.

HE was bawling his wares at the full stretch of a thin, reedy voice. The sounds he emitted were unintelligible to the 'uneducated;' but he must needs shout his best, if he wished to make himself heard above the roar of the clamorous multitude, which spread out in billowy undulations to right and left, and overflowed into the numberless courts and alleys, and gulfs and bays, with which the main line of thoroughfare was indented.

A battered hulk adrift on the waters, the sport of winds and waves. A wastrel on the great sea of life. A bit of human wreckage carried hither and thither upon the yeasty tide of humanity; now hurried towards the breakers

by the rising storm of prejudice, now flung into the boiling ocean-depths by a hurricane of angry passions.

Backward and forward,
And to and fro,
Flotsam and jetsam,
They come and go.

He had been borne right across Europe by the current of events, and when I saw him, was crying cream cheese in the middle of the Judenmarkt in the chief city of the world. But to get so far from his original moorings in the little town on the banks of the Vistula, had taken 'a monstrous cantle' out of his life. Persecution had driven his family thence when he was little more than a child. They fled northward to Riga. This was the beginning of sorrows. From the date of the migration to Riga count forty and six years; this brings us to 1892, the year in which David Lipsitski first landed in England.

The long outstretching hand of Time has dealt hardly, even brutally, with this poor waif of the Judenstrasse and the Ghetto. David has lost three of his front teeth and the lobe of his right ear; he is also minus a finger on the right hand. Jew-baiting was counted legitimate sport in many of the Christian towns where Lipsitski sought a refuge and desired to make a home. The last Continental city in which the poor Jew had a settlement was Elberfeld in the Rhineland. This was ten years back. He buried his wife there, and lost his business; went to Amsterdam, to Bremen, always the mock of Fortune, and ever scourged by the hand of Fate; losing heart, losing money, losing health.

In 1889 he was drifting about the Baltic provinces, eventually finding an asylum in Hamburg, where he had been located for some time during the war of 1870, when he was in funds; but time and chance proving unpropitious, he came over to England with a cattle-boat, and finally 'brought up' in 'the Lane'—Middlesex Street, Aldgate, where I found him.

His stock-in-trade consisted only of a few cream cheeses; unprotected from contact with grimy hands save and except for the wretched little scrap of paper torn from some coffee-house news-sheet, and wrapped round the dainty delicacies by the dirty fingers of the vendor himself. They were exposed for sale in a fancy soap-box which, like the man who carried it, had seen service—hard service, which had left its mark behind it.

David could not, by any stretch of charity and without abuse of custom, be called clean. Sober, he was. Honest, as the world goes. Truthful, perhaps; but clean? No, David was not clean. Neither in clothing nor in person was he clean. But whose was the blame? The man was a true child of the Ghetto. He had been badgered and baited and bullied through life. The sole of his foot had seldom been allowed to rest in any place where it had lighted. Kicks and curses had been his portion through all the years when the nerves are most sensitive and the mind receives its deepest impressions. Squalor and misery were his birthright. Filth and foulness he was condemned to by

reason of his race. He grew up with them, they remained with him, and now he cannot rid himself of their company if he would, and perhaps would not if he could, since 'tis strange, 'tis passing strange to what base uses we may grow accustomed.

David's brethren have no fastidious scruples about cleanliness. They buy his cream cheese without winking, drop it into the family hold-all, where the haddocks and vegetables are already reposing, and where the fowl, the 'bolas,' and big loaf of rye-bread will presently join them.

David is a tall, shambling, sickly-looking man, with a heavy crop of rough, tangled hair, iron-gray in colour, and worn rather long; a don't-kick-me expression in his thin, feeble face; and in his eyes, which are large, and lustrous at fifty-nine, one sees a glimmer which throws a faint ray of light upon his complex character and over his checkered career. There is greed, perhaps craftiness, in the eyes, but there is entreaty also. The man's eyes are at once avid and beseeching. I notice that he never smiles. The mob thickens round him; rough market compliments are exchanged, rude practical jokes are played by irrepressible youths from Polly Nathan's, quarrels are fought out by strength of lung or strength of arm. Domestic incidents are never wanting to enliven the scene, for the poor Jew lives much in the open air; there are 'battles royal' between the sexes—the eternal feminine is very much in evidence in the market-place—but through all the tumult and turmoil David remains unmoved. Is the man really wooden? Has he no blood in his veins? No heart to feel, no nerves to tingle? Not at all. He is merely a foreign Jew, who by many a painful lesson has learnt not to meddle in other folks' business, not to give the enemy a chance by showing on which side his sympathies are enlisted or his interests menaced. He calls 'cream cheese,' regardless of disturbances at his elbow, or the pranks of noisy youth in a crowd.

A ragged coat, with a superabundance of grease adhering to it, is not an uncommon sight in 'the Lane'; but David's garment must have been a wonder to beholders. How it held on him was not far from a miracle. He had worn it constantly—at night as well as by day—for months together; and it was twelve years, gone last Purim, since he bought it of a dealer whose shop was near the synagogue in the Muiderstraat at Amsterdam. 'It was a good coat,' he said. The coat had certainly been a very good one once upon a time. Now, it was a coat no longer, but simply a dirty agglomeration of greasy rags. That David divested himself of it at sleeping time, I do not believe; since, had he succeeded in getting out of it, he could never have got into it again. But how to get out of it would have puzzled any 'Christom' man. The problem could only be solved by a descendant of Shem with a genius for patient persuasion. David expected a new coat would be coming to him at the fast of the Atonement. 'It had been promised,' he said. I hope he got it, for no man in the Judenmarkt stood in worse need of an overall than David Lipsitski. But I should

like to know this. Did he pull off that coat of many summers, or did the coat drop off him?

David's head was covered with that very unpicturesque article of male attire known as a 'Whitechapel bowler,' and round the too narrow brim was an unmistakable accumulation which told its own story of hard wear and long usage. The 'bowler' did not improve the *ensemble*. It destroyed the harmony. Between David's clothes and David's self, there existed a subtle spiritual affinity; each was affiliated to the other. Nothing was discordant but the 'bowler.' That pale Jewish face, with the long flowing beard and aquiline nose, should have been surmounted by nothing less than a cap of black sheepskin; and twenty years old at the least.

What a story the man could tell, had he a tongue to speak! but he is dumb, inarticulate. His English is a negligible quantity, while his timidity and suspicion have become ingrained. Pushing my way through the thronging multitude, in the direction of Aldgate, I could yet distinguish above the hubbub and confusion of the market, the thin, weak voice of David Lipsitski, shouting with mechanical iteration: '*Der Rahmkäse, rahmkäse; sonice, sonice, twopenny, twopenny.*'

A FAMOUS FOUNDRY.

THE end of Soho foundry, the famous works of Boulton and Watt, the cradle of the steam-engine, and the first mechanical engineering shops the world ever saw, recently broken up and brought to the auctioneer's hammer, conjures up many memories of the past, and whether viewed in the light of the historical associations recalled, or the lessons of the changes time brings, is well worthy of some passing comment at our hands.

Soho, as our readers will remember, is about two miles north of Birmingham, and was until the middle of the last century a barren heath and rabbit warren, the sole relic of the past, the well of the warrener's hut still existing. On this spot Boulton erected his famous factory about 1760, and devoted his attention to the manufacture of metal wares and similar articles. This factory, the 'Soho' properly so called, was dismantled as far back as 1850-1. Many of the tools being removed to 'Soho foundry,' about a mile distant from 'old Soho.' It is with the fortunes of the 'Soho foundry' that we are now concerned, as this famous establishment, now sold, had survived its parent by nearly half a century. Soho foundry was built in 1775, and covered an area of over nineteen acres; its foundation was due to the rapidly extending business of Boulton and Watt, who found their existing works quite unable to cope with the ever-increasing demand for the new steam-engine.

Into the early history of the steam-engine, and the struggles of James Watt, it is foreign to our purpose to enter. *Smiles's Lives of the Engineers* has already told the famous story of years of labour, perseverance, and anxiety, crowned by success and well-deserved prosperity. We deal rather at the present moment with the historic foundry, the scene of so much

skill and ingenuity, exerting an influence on arts and manufactures, which will endure for all time.

The foundry stands on the banks of the Birmingham canal, and was inaugurated on January 28, 1776, by a banquet given by Boulton, quaintly described as a 'rearing feast.' Details of the feast yet survive to set forth in classic style the good cheer provided. 'The first fruits of the cultivated land at Soho were sacrificed at the altar of Vulcan and eaten by the Cyclops in the great hall of the temple, which was forty-six feet wide by one hundred feet long.' Military music was provided, and a speech by Boulton impressing industry and thrift on his workmen terminated the great day. It is interesting after the lapse of nearly one hundred and twenty years to recall Boulton's closing words at this memorable feast. 'May this establishment be ever prosperous, may no misfortune ever happen to it, may it give birth to many useful arts and inventions, may it prove beneficial to all mankind and yield comfort and happiness to all who may be employed in it.' A good augury for the aims of the new foundry, which the verdict of over a century will amply indorse as fully fulfilled, and worthy of the great names associated with the undertaking.

To attempt to describe in any detail the work turned out by Soho would be impossible; suffice it to say that every kind of engineering and industrial goods were invented and turned out, and the history of the rise and progress of Soho is that of the century itself. To adequately describe the famous coining machinery at Soho, from which were subsequently modelled the royal mints of many governments, would alone require much space; whilst the invention of gas by Murdock at Soho, would in itself alone have stamped the place with fame for all time. Of late years the grand old works have busied themselves with machinery for vessels, and pumping plant, and other important contracts; but the inevitable changes wrought by time, the fierce competition of the present day, and the rivalry of never and more modern appliances and plant have gradually told on the establishment, and it was decided to cease operations.

TESTED.

I USED to wonder in those summer days—
Those careless summer days of long ago,
When life meant light and music and the low,
Sweet ripple of soft laughter—if our ways
Of loving differed, if those ancient lays
You sang to me, of lovers loving so
That they could die for love, were true or no,
And if *my* love were thus beyond dispraise.
Dear, when the sun sank down below the rim,
And when black waves beat on the lonely shore—
When all the land seemed girt with shadows grim,
Then, my heart turned to you in anguish sore—
I knew then mine in truth had come from Him
Who dowers men with that Love which dies no more!

KATE MELLERSH.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 643.—VOL. XIII.

SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

UPPER-CLASS EMIGRATION.

WHAT shall we do with our sons?

The cry is loud and increasing, the query meets our eye in the daily papers, in the advertisements inserted by colonisation companies and by pamphleteers; it obtrudes itself in a very forcible manner upon the attention of many a paterfamilias of the upper and middle classes, who cannot afford to do more than give his sons a fair start in life, to sink or swim according to their characters or abilities.

Emigration amongst the lower classes has now been brought to a highly systematic point. Every line of steamers whose vessels leave an English port for foreign lands, has special arrangements in connection with it. Emigration offices are found in every considerable town in the United Kingdom, and full information about the colonies may be had for the asking at any of them—particularly from the Emigrants' Information Office, 31 Broadway, Westminster, S.W.

But public schoolboys wishing to go abroad, having hitherto been brought up in more or less comfort, find themselves at a loss on two points—where to go, and, having decided this—what to do when they get there. And let me say here, that it is infinitely better that the sons of our landowners, officers, and merchants should go out beyond the seas than add to the vast army of professional men, so steadily increasing and crowded to such an extent, that often a man has reached the prime of life before he finds himself earning a competent income.

There are fundamentally two outlets open to our youths, and it is between these that the choice must in every case be made; they are (1) the colonies or (2) foreign countries.

Take the colonies first. In almost all our possessions, competition has reached almost as high a point as it has at home. In Australia, Canada, and New Zealand, the artisan or skilled workman is infinitely better off than an educated young fellow without any particular

trade; we find scions of good English families as storekeepers or cattlemen on Australian stations and on the South African veldt, or journalists in Southern towns, eking out a bare livelihood by their pen. Many labour for a pittance under settlers of the old stamp, men socially and in point of education far their inferiors, but who came out when the colony was younger. The stronger by degrees work their way painfully upwards with almost as much difficulty as they would have had at home. The weaker take to gold-mining, drinking, smuggling, or worse, and go rapidly down to the pit of the lost.

The United States, especially Florida, California, and Dakota, all favoured portions of the great American Republic, are similarly inundated by our upper classes. Wheat-farming in Dakota, fruit-growing in California and Florida, are now very considerably developed—a few more years and these countries too will be included amongst the 'full up.' Where then can the young Englishman turn to?

There is, I would remind him, a certain part of the American continent which has hitherto never been seriously taken into consideration as affording an opening for small capitalists. It might be blotted out from the map, so little does it enter into calculation. From the Texas frontier southwards to the river Plate there lies a country some four thousand miles in length, a region which is one of the richest on earth. From Mexico to Uruguay lies a practically virgin world, containing boundless natural resources, and capable of turning out an El Dorado to the industrious pioneer.

Why these countries have been hitherto so much neglected it is easy to account for. Political turmoil, depreciated currencies, language, climate, &c., above all, ignorance as to the true conditions of life there—these are the chief drawbacks. But those who make inquiries will acquire astonishing information. There are Englishmen in South America, hard-working and enterprising Englishmen, who are exacting

from the soil its toll on both sides of the Andes, and making money, not through speculations in worthless Government bonds, but from wheat, sugar-cane, coffee, and other tropical produce. If these men do well in those far-off lands, the fringe of whose fertile wildernesses is barely touched, why should not others? Here at last there is scope.

The disadvantages which I mentioned above as being generally considered unfavourable to immigration, I will discuss briefly.

(a) Political revolutions, convulsing as they do each and all of the Spanish-American States, are nevertheless purely amongst the natives themselves. A European who does not interfere in politics—and if he is wise he will shun them as he would the Gorgon's head—is seldom molested if circumspect in his conduct. Of course in the interior, property is always more or less unsafe in time of civil riot; the authorities on the coast cannot in such a case control the far inland districts. Compensation, however, is obtainable through the British Consul if damage is proved to have resulted from political disturbances, in which the sufferer has taken no part; though I may say here, that in the Argentine Republic, where revolutions are chronic, it is a rare thing indeed for a European to suffer loss from this cause. When fools fight, wise men profit, and in countries where the energies of the citizens are devoted to local and general disturbance, the European on his lands out in the open country is monopolising agriculture and trade.

(b) Depreciated currencies. The River Plate paper-money is at a discount of from two hundred to two hundred and fifty per cent. Paraguayan paper is at a discount compared with Argentine paper at as much again, the gold premium there being from five hundred to seven hundred per cent. A young man going out to these States can afford to wait a few years till the premium on gold falls. And fall it most assuredly will as the territory becomes opened up; there is, indeed, a wide belief that it has already touched its highest point. Meanwhile, as he buys all he requires in the country itself, he finds the paper-money as good for his purpose in payment of wages and purchase of utensils as any bullion. And as he will, if a competent man of business, generally be a creditor of the country for so much paper, in the future, when paper rises, his assets will improve in value to a corresponding extent.

The most extraordinary ideas prevail even in these countries themselves as to the climate in different districts. In the towns on the sea-coast (all the towns of any importance are on the coast), the natives themselves have fearful tales to tell of the deadly climates up-country. 'You are going up to Jujuy!' your friends in Buenos Ayres exclaim in horror. 'You will die of malaria before three months. Jujuy is all swamp or desert.' On arriving at that remote Argentine province you find a bracing mountainous climate, unparalleled for enjoyable living for six months in the year. When at last the heat comes, with care in clothing and cooking you will ward off ague with no more

difficulty than you would a cold at home. True, in freshly cleared land it is often impossible to go free, but if taken in time these low fevers are easily got rid of. There are, undeniably, hot marshy valleys in all these tropical States most pestilential and deadly under present conditions; but all the republics enjoy great variety of climate, and on the mountain-slopes and tablelands of Brazil and Bolivia, Peru, Mexico, Ecuador, take which you will, the conditions of life are first class, and the temperature and soil adapted to every form of animal and vegetable growth.

'I cannot go to South America because I don't know Spanish,' say many. The Spanish and Portuguese languages are amongst the easiest to acquire. In three months a man of ordinary intelligence can make himself understood without difficulty—in a year he will be perfectly at home. Englishmen pride themselves on being execrable linguists, but why it should be so, does not appear. Schiller says that with every new learned tongue a man gets a new soul. Certainly the knowledge of Spanish and Portuguese is daily becoming of more practical use.

The course that I advise to the intending emigrant to South America is, for six months previously to take lessons in the language of the country to which he is going—Portuguese if to Brazil, Spanish if to any other part of the continent. A knowledge of chemistry, sufficient to enable him to analyse soils, will also be of great use. On reaching, say Pernambuco, or Guayaquil, or whatever port he may have selected, let him make inquiries as to the capabilities of the various provinces, and then arrange with some estate owner to teach him his business for a year or two—sugar-planting, coffee, cocoa, indigo, tobacco, chinchona, or anything else. Once having got an insight into the run of plantation work, he can either continue working for a wage, or if sufficiently affluent, set up, at once for himself. Land is cheap, labour is cheap—in many parts it is Indian, and costs next to nothing. Land may be cleared at a third of what it would cost in the colonies; the ground once cleared yields large and valuable crops. Transport is not difficult, well-meaning railway companies having run lines through vast fertile plains and forests to end in some stagnant little town at the end of everywhere.

There is no doubt at all that for an ordinarily intelligent and robust youth there can be no comparison between his prospects as a tropical planter, and clerkdom or professional life in a crowded English city. One is a free life, large and full of opportunities—the other narrow, unhealthy because confined, a terrible struggle owing to competition.

I have purposely left unnoticed certain colonies belonging to this country which partake of a tropical character. The West Indian islands at the commencement of the century were so many gems in the British crown. Since the negro emancipation, they have steadily gone backwards, though why, it is not easy to see. Fertile, surrounded by the ocean, within a fortnight of London and a week of New York, surely there are great possibilities there. We are a race of colonisers—turn then to these

still new regions in the south-west, oh pater-familias, and despatch your young hopeful to anywhere in America between Cancer and Capricorn.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

CHAPTER XV.—IN THE HOUSE.

THEN followed the opening of the newly elected Commons. Our own member went off with a quiet air of self-reliance, not arrogance. 'I am not in the least afraid of my own powers,' he repeated. 'I have tried and proved them. I shall speak to the House first, and to the country next.'

So he went off, the strong man armed, to begin the fight; and we looked after him, as he strode down the street, for my own part always with the feeling that we had somehow changed places.

'Robert will get, I suppose, some day, the desire of his heart,' said Isabel. 'I wonder why men desire these things.'

'They are very grand things,' I told her. 'Robert wants to be a leader of men—is not that a great thing to desire? What greater thing can there be?'

'Yes, if he is fit for it, and if he be a wise leader. But Robert puts the leadership first and the wisdom next. He only desires the wisdom in order to get the leadership.'

'Nay, Isabel, we must think exactly the contrary. Otherwise, how is the world ever to respect the leader?'

'I cannot think anything except what I know.'

'Well, then. Power is a very great thing to have. Every man in the world, except myself, ought to desire power. I don't want it, I confess, because I am not ambitious. Perhaps that is philosophy. Give me a tranquil, an obscure life if you like, with private interests; boat-building, for instance—and—what it seems I shall have to forego.'

Isabel paid no heed to the latter sentence, but went on talking about Robert. 'Always to lead, always to command. That is Robert's single thought. If he was King, he would not be contented unless he ruled the whole world.'

'A noble ambition, truly.'

'Sometimes I wonder whether all the great men of history have been self-seekers as well as masterful.'

'I should say—all. The personal motives, desire of place and authority, must underlie everything else.'

'Then how can any woman love a man who thinks of nothing but himself? I could not, George; but you know it—you—I cannot.'

'Well, Isabel, a woman may love the greatness and strength of the man first of all. Besides, she may call that a noble ambition which you call self-seeking. She may call that tenacity which you call selfishness. She may lend her whole strength.' I thought of Frances and what she would do. 'To advance the career in which her husband is absorbed, without asking for thanks or recognition from him at all.'

'I could not do it, George. The thought of devotion without thanks or recognition makes me wretched. I could never love a man who would accept such work. Besides, I could never love a man unless I filled his heart, and made him think of me.'

So she spoke, telling me all her thoughts in sweet confidence, knowing that it would not be abused. Well, some women differ. Frances would be contented if only her husband became a great man, with neither thanks nor recognition. Isabel cared nothing about the greatness. And I suppose that some women are contented with the ideal they have set up; they love not the strong man for his strength, nor the weak man for his weakness; they love an imaginary man. In this way the noblest woman may love the lowest man, seeing her ideal even through the matted overgrowth of animalism. Isabel had no power, unfortunately, of setting up an ideal; in this case, she knew the real man in his workshop, without his coat, so to speak, in his shirt sleeves. I said so. 'You worked with him, and for him, Isabel. That destroyed the ideal. No man is a hero to his typewriter.'

For three weeks nothing happened. At the house we went on as usual, but without Robert, who remained at Westminster, living in my chambers, while I took over the work of his boat-yard all day and the care of his mistress every evening. We were loyal to him; there was passed between us no word or look of which one need be ashamed: Isabel had repeated her promise; she had renewed the oath; one could only wait.

One morning, however, I found a letter lying on my plate. It was from Frances. I opened it: a long letter. I laid it aside: with my second cup of tea I began to read it leisurely. But over the second page I jumped with interjections.

'MY DEAR GEORGE,' she began, 'I was in the House last night looking down upon the new lot. They seem to be rather a mixed lot. We have had losses. However, a good many of our old friends are back again, and the majority is assured and is large enough if the Whips do their duty. Alas! If my mother were still living, with her salon and her dinners, that majority would become a solid block, growing every day. I might, myself, have such a salon, if there was a man anywhere for whose sake I could take the trouble and make myself a leader. But, George, as you know very well, there is not.'

I laid down the note. I could see in imagination Frances writing these words. She would throw down the pen and spring to her feet in impatience—in queenly impatience because among all her subjects she could not find one man strong enough. Yet to one strong and ambitious she would give, not only herself, but also such help in his career as few, very few, men could hope for; the help of a very long purse, very great family influence, political experience, and social power. She wanted to find such a man; she desired above all things to be a political lady, the wife of a great political leader; she would exact from him in

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return for all she gave, nothing but devotion to his career; she would acquiesce in his working and thinking for no other object.

On the other side of the table sat the other type of woman; one who wanted nothing of life but love, with sufficiency and tranquillity; one who would be perfectly contented with a life in the shade, and with a perfectly obscure husband.

As for myself, it seemed then, and it seems now, as if no distinctions—which do not distinguish—were worth the struggle and conflict, the misrepresentation, the lies and slanders of the party contest. Whereas, to live in obscurity beside a babbling brook—on Wapping Old Stairs, for instance; or among thick woods—the burial-ground of St John's, Wapping, for instance; or in country lanes with high hedges on either side—say the High Street, Wapping; with love and Isabel. . . . I resumed the letter.

'The questions do really grow more tedious every day. At last the adjourned debate began again—at half-past nine. You never take interest in anything really interesting, my dear George, so that it is useless to tell you that the Bill was a Labour Bill, and that everybody thought it a very useful Bill—even the working-men Members until to-night. However, the Bill, everybody says, will now have to be abandoned. In other words, your cousin, in a single maiden speech, has done the Government the injury of making them withdraw a Bill. It is equivalent to a defeat. But I am anticipating. My dear George, your cousin's speech is talked of by everybody.'

'Where's the paper?' I cried. 'Give it to me, Captain.' I tore it open and looked at the debates. Yes, there it was! Robert had made his first speech. 'Look, Isabel!' I cried. 'Look! he has succeeded with a single speech.' I threw the paper across the table and went on reading.

'I daresay you will have seen all about it in the papers. Now it is very curious; I had almost forgotten that your cousin was a candidate. They told me that he had no chance whatever, and I left off thinking about him as a candidate. Of course I could not forget the fiery orator of Shadwell, or the hero of the splendid fight that I witnessed. So that when he got up to speak I was quite unprepared for him. Of course I remembered him instantly; he is not the kind of man one forgets readily. I think he is quite the handsomest man in the House; not the tallest, but what they used to call the properest man and the comeliest; he has not the least air of fashion, but he has the look of distinction.'

'Good,' said the Captain. 'I always said that he looked like a duke.'

'Read the speech, George,' said Isabel, 'and then go on with the letter.'

I read the speech aloud. The oblique narrative makes everything cold. Even in direct narrative one loses the voice—in this case so rich and musical a voice—and the aspect of the man, the personality of the speaker—in this case so marked and so distinguished. Now the House of Commons may be cold—how can that unhappy body, doomed to listen day after day to floods and cataracts of words, be any-

thing but cold?—but I was sure even from this dry 'précis' that the members must have listened with surprise and delight. The close of the speech I turned back from the oblique to direct narrative, and read it in the first person.

'Oh!' said Isabel. 'I think I hear him speaking. Those facts I copied for him myself from a blue-book.'

'Robert will be a great man,' said the Captain. 'My dear, they will make him something. He will be a nobleman and you will be my lady.'

'You read it just as Robert would speak it,' said Isabel. 'Your voice is like his, only not so strong. But you are like him in so many ways.'

'It is a noble speech, Isabel.'

'It is his first bid for power,' she distinguished. 'I daresay it is an able speech. But I feel as if I had been behind the scenes while he was preparing the show. To me, George, it will always be a show.'

'You are like the child who wants to go beyond the story, Isabel. Why not be contented with the things presented?'

I went on with the letter.

'I told you, George, in that East-End den, that the man was a born orator. He spoke better to-night, in the House, than before those working-men; perhaps because he was more careful. He is one of those speakers, I mean, with whom repression increases strength. He spoke consciously, I am sure, to the country as well as to the House. His voice is magnetic in its richness and fulness; his periods are balanced; he spoke without the least hesitation, yet without the fatal fluency; he was not embarrassed; he spoke with authority. The effect of his speech upon the House was wonderful; the members were dominated. They listened—compelled to listen. When he sat down there was a universal gasp, not of relief, but of astonishment.

'Of course I do not know what your cousin means or wishes by going into the House. Probably nothing but a vague ambition. What should such a man understand of the political career? Yet, when I say "such a man," I think of his trade, not of his appearance or his manner. He looks like a king and has the manners—in the House at least, whatever he might have in society—of one accustomed to the best people. Come and talk to me about him.

'Of course, also, one must never judge by a first speech. It is always interesting to hear the maiden effort. Very likely your cousin prepared every phrase and every word of it, and he would break down in debate. I wait for his second speech, and for a speech in reply.

'The member for Shadwell, as I told you before, is absurdly like you in face and in general appearance, but he is a bigger man. Perhaps he resembles the Judge, who was a very big man, more than you. Well, George, for your sake I shall watch his movements and read his speeches. He may do something considerable; he may not. Many a man makes a good beginning in the House who cannot

keep it up. The floor is knee-deep with the dust and bones of dead and gone ambitions. They take the place of the rushes which they formerly strewn on the floor. I was looking at the faces of the members last night. There were the old stagers who have long since parted with their ambitions, and now sit quiet and resigned, and vote like sheep. Why do they do it? What is the joy of remaining all their lives among the rank and file? Then I saw the faces of the new young men. I made them all out, one after the other, those who are ambitious and those who are not. Oh! George, what an interesting place the House of Commons is, and why—why—why have you left to a tradesman cousin all the ambition in the family?’

I read all this aloud.

‘Who is your correspondent, George?’ Isabel asked. ‘I suppose it is your friend, Lady Frances. Why is she so contemptuous about tradesmen?’

‘She only thinks that I ought to have gone into the House, Isabel. It is her way of expressing herself.’

However, the rest I did not read aloud.

‘You may bring your cousin to see me, George. I am at home this day week. You so seldom come over to see me that I am almost tempted to come over to Wapping. But it would be too dreadful to see you among the chips, with your coat off and your sleeves turned up, and an apron, and, I daresay, disfiguring callosities already on your hands. When you are sick and tired of it, come back to the world. Lord Caerleon will soon want a private secretary. The post would suit you entirely. He is a man of the world—not a politician only. And there are still things to be had worth the having, and in the gift of ministers, which are not awarded by competitive examination to candidates who certainly have no more merit than you yourself. Come back. Great donkey—it is dull without you.—Your affectionate sister—by adoption, FRANCES.’

(To be continued.)

A CHAPTER ON HOUSE-FLIES.

At certain seasons of the year very few of our dwelling-houses are free from the presence of flies; they force themselves upon our notice in various ways, either by reason of their perpetual buzzing upon our window-panes, by their monotonous hum as they fly ceaselessly to and fro in our rooms, by their continual presence, both living and dead, wherever there is food of any kind, or lastly, by their persistent and irritating attention to our own persons. It is not generally known, however, that there are several different species of flies which thus torment us, and therefore it may profit us to consider for a little time, in a very elementary way, a few of the more conspicuous kinds, pointing out how one kind differs from another, not only in appearance and structure, but also in habits of life.

It is desirable, perhaps, to take as our first example the species which is properly entitled to the popular name of ‘Common House-fly’

—that known to scientific men as *Musca domestica*. Before describing this little creature, however, we should like to draw our readers’ attention to what seems to be a rather prevalent popular error—namely, the idea that flies grow, in the ordinary sense of the term, and that the size of any fly we see upon the window-pane merely depends upon its age. Nothing could be further from the mark, for when a fly once becomes a fly—in other words, when it escapes from the pupa-case and acquires the use of wings, its development is completed and all power of growth at an end. It follows, then, that where there is a marked difference of size between two flies, we may be tolerably certain that they belong to quite distinct species.

It is not our purpose to go minutely into the structure, either external or internal, of flies, but it may be useful to mention that the great characteristic of all insects belonging to the Diptera, as the order of flies is called, marking them off from all other insects, is the possession of only one pair of wings. The second pair of wings, found in butterflies, moths, beetles, &c., is here represented by a pair of small balancers, called halteres, which are attached to the body, one on each side, just behind the true wings, and which in shape resemble a pair of miniature drum-sticks.

In its general appearance the common house-fly is very sombrely dressed, and seems to be without adornment of any kind, but on a closer examination it will be seen that it is really quite an elegantly marked insect. When seen from above, against the light, the front of the head is seen to glisten with two resplendent silvery-yellow patches, the thorax or middle part of the body between the wings is elegantly striped, while the abdomen or hinder part is beautifully checkered with yellow and black. The wings are transparent and tinged with gray, with a most brilliant and beautiful iridescence in certain lights. All these points give to the little creature a beauty of its own, entirely lost to the majority of people, merely because the insect is a common and insignificant one, and seemingly not worth the trouble of examining.

On holding up the fly to the light so as to look through the wing, it will be seen by the aid of a magnifying glass that there are a number of almost parallel veins running through the wing from base to apex, and that these are connected by short cross-veins. The fourth of these parallel veins, counting from the fore margin of the wing, is seen to be bent upwards at an obtuse angle towards the third, and this is really an important character and an easy one by which to distinguish this particular kind of house-fly from some others which are equally common and similar in size and appearance, but which have this vein quite straight. The head of our fly is a very pretty object. The greater part is occupied by two large reddish-brown hemispheres, one on each side. These are the compound eyes, and each of them consists of several thousand separate hexagonal lenses, arranged so as to cause an appearance under the microscope like the engine-turning on the back of a watch. Between

these compound eyes, and quite on the top of the head, are a trio of small clear dots, arranged in a triangle, like set jewels. These are the simple eyes, and their exact purpose does not seem to be thoroughly understood. In front of the head are the antennæ or feelers, and each consists of three joints, with a feathered bristle arising from the back of the last joint. This bristle is an important aid in the identification of the different species of flies, in some kinds being quite simple, in others beautifully plumose or feathered, as in the common species now occupying our attention. Below the head of the fly may be seen projecting the long thick tongue or proboscis, which is a very wonderful structure. We have only space to say a very little about this organ; to describe it fully would occupy more than the whole space devoted to our present article. It is a true sucker, but a very complicated one, made up of several pieces united so as to form a tube, which not only serves for the conveyance of the fluid food to the mouth, but also for the passage of saliva from the mouth in order to moisten and dissolve particles of the substance upon which the fly is feeding. At the tip of the proboscis are to be found hardened rings which aid in triturating the food. We have already described the general appearance of the body of the fly, so that it only remains for us to say a word or two about the legs. As in other insects there are six legs, each consisting of several joints. The foot is composed of five separate joints, the last of which is terminated by a pair of curved claws. Between the claws is a pair of minute pads, generally supposed to act as suckers. It is by the aid of these pads that flies are enabled to climb the smooth window-pane, or walk along the ceiling. Whether these pads act merely as suckers, or whether in addition they secrete a sticky substance to aid the fly in its vertical peregrinations, has not been satisfactorily proved. We cannot, however, place much faith in the latter theory.

The eggs of the common house-fly are generally laid in dung, but almost any kind of dirt or filth may be appropriated by the female for this purpose. An important factor, therefore, in the extermination or at least the diminution in numbers of these pests would seem to be absolute cleanliness in our rooms and kitchens, and the prevention of any accumulation of dust. From the eggs are hatched small, whitish, footless grubs, which feed on the filth amongst which they live, soon becoming pupæ enclosed in a hard skin. When the fly is ready to emerge, its head is furnished with a large protuberance, filled with fluid, with which it forces off the lid of the case. When the fly first escapes, its wings are in quite a crumpled condition, and this circumstance, combined with its enormously swollen head, gives the insect a very grotesque appearance. In a very few minutes, however, the wings become fully expanded, and at the same time the head shrinks and the fluid is withdrawn, the whole body hardens and changes colour, and the fly is perfect.

Of the other kinds of house-flies very little need be said. There is a smaller kind, liable to be mistaken for the *Musca domestica*, but

which has the fourth vein of the wing straight. The abdomen has the base at each side yellow and transparent, while the front of the head is brilliant silvery white, with the eyes almost meeting, at least in the male, at the top of the head. This fly rejoices in the name of *Homalomyia canicularis*, though it used to be called *Musca domestica minor*. So we, too, might quite legitimately call it the 'smaller house-fly.' It has a similar life-history to that of its larger relative, with the exception that the eggs are laid in decaying vegetable matter.

A third kind of house-fly, and the only one that really 'bites' or 'stings,' is distinguished by having its weapon of offence, the proboscis, sticking straight out horizontally in front of its head. Moreover, the fourth vein of the wings is gently curved towards the third, and neither straight, as in the 'smaller,' nor bent at an angle, as in the 'common' house-fly. On the whole, it is a more prettily marked insect than either of the others, though its beauty hardly compensates us for its vicious habits. It is a veritable blood-sucker, attacking our hands and faces, and well merits both its popular and scientific name—the 'sharp-mouthed stinger,' or *Stomoxys calcitrans*. Its thorax is similarly striped to that of the common house-fly, but the abdomen is very differently adorned, being yellowish-gray, with six black dots, three on the second ring and three on the third. Its life-history is similar to that of the common house-fly.

Quite different both in habits and appearance from all these flies is the common Blue-bottle, called scientifically *Calliphora erythrocephala*. This is almost too well known to need description. It is a much larger insect, of a beautiful metallic blue colour, with a sheen which changes its position as we turn the fly about in various lights. The front of the head on its lower part is of a reddish colour, and the fourth vein of the wings, so often alluded to, is bent at a very sharp angle towards the third. The eggs of the bluebottle are laid in flesh of different kinds, and every housewife knows the difficulty in summer and autumn of keeping these unwelcome visitors away from her choicest viands. Even living wounds have been selected by these flies for the purpose of depositing their eggs, and great must be the agony caused by the maggots which hatch from them. The maggots are ready to escape from the egg in a very few hours after these have been laid, and themselves soon enter the next or pupal stage. As to the duration of life of the perfect fly, it is probably much longer than that of either the larva or pupa, and some bluebottles may even hibernate through the winter, and so live on from one year to the next.

The last fly we shall notice, though not so often found in houses as the others, yet possesses an interest from its habits. This is the common Flesh-fly, *Sarcophaga carnaria*. It is about the size of the bluebottle, but of a more slender build, of a gray colour, and perhaps the most handsome fly we have considered. The face is silvery, the veins in the wings are similar in arrangement to those of the bluebottle, the thorax is beautifully striped, alter-

nately black and gray, while the abdomen is brilliantly checkered with black and silvery gray. The females of this fly are viviparous, that is to say, they do not lay eggs, but living larvæ. These are deposited upon all sorts of animal matter, and in countless numbers. Meigen, a great authority on the Diptera in the earlier half of the present century, has calculated that, supposing a female to lay only fifty eggs, which is a very small estimate, say on the 1st of April, and that half of these become females and lay fifty eggs each, by the end of October, at the same reckoning, would be produced from this single fly a progeny of no less than five hundred and eight millions of separate individuals. By allowing eighty eggs to each female this number would amount to as many as eight thousand millions. So that, to use Meigen's own words, had not Nature provided ample means for their extermination, more especially in the shape of insectivorous birds, this host would indeed leave little meat for man, and *fast-days would prevail!*

THE MAHALAPSI DIAMOND.

CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

AGAIN, as usual in Kimberley at this season, the next morning broke clear and invigorating. All the world of the corrugated-iron city seemed, after breakfast, brisk, keen, and full of life as they went about their business. The Cape swallows flitted, and hawked, and played hither and thither in the bright atmosphere, or sat, looking sharply about them, upon the telegraph wires or housetops, preening their feathers and displaying their handsome, chestnut body colouring. The great market square was still full of wagons, and long spans of oxen, and of native people, drawn from well-nigh every quarter of Southern Africa.

Out there in the sunlit market-place stood a man, whose strong brain was just now busily engaged in piecing together and puzzling out the patchwork of this extraordinary case. David Ayling, with his mighty voice, Scotch accent, oak-like frame, keen gray eyes, and vast iron-gray beard, was a periodical and excellently well-known Kimberley visitant. For years he had traded and hunted in the far interior. His reputation for courage, resource, and fair dealing was familiar to all men, and David's name had for years been a household word from the Cape to the Zambesi. Periodically, the trader came down to Kimberley with his wagons and outfit, after a year or two spent in the distant interior. Yesterday morning he had come in, and in the afternoon and evening he seemed to hear upon men's tongues nothing else than Frank Farnborough's case, and the story of the Mahalapsi diamond. Now David had known Frank for some few years, and had taken a liking to him. Several times he had brought down-country small collections of skins, and trophies of the chase, got together at the young man's suggestion. He had in his wagon, even now, some new and rare birds from the far-off Zambesi lands, and the two had had many a deal together. Frank's un-

happy plight at once took hold of the trader's sympathies, and the Mahalapsi and crocodile episodes tended yet further to excite his interest. Certain suspicions had been growing in his mind. This morning, before breakfast, he had carefully read and re-read the newspaper report of the trial, and now, just before the court opened, he was waiting impatiently with further developments busily evolving in his brain. There was a bigger crowd even than yesterday; the prisoner and counsel had come in; all waited anxiously for the end of the drama. In a few minutes the court entered, grave and self-possessed, and the leading judge began to arrange his notes.

At that moment, David Ayling, who had shouldered his way to the fore, stood up and addressed the court in his tremendous deep-chested tones, which penetrated easily to every corner of the chamber.

'My lords,' he said, 'before you proceed further, I should like to lay one or two facts before you—not yet known in this case. They are very important, and I think you should hear them in order that justice may be done, and perhaps an innocent man saved. I have only just come from the Zambesi and never heard of this trial till late yesterday afternoon.'

Two persons, as they listened to these words and looked at the strong, determined man uttering them, felt, they knew not why, instantly braced and strengthened, as if by a mighty tonic. They were Frank, the prisoner, hitherto despairing and out of heart, and Nina Staarbrucker, sitting at the back of the court, pale and trembling with miserable anticipations.

'You know me, my lord, I think,' went on David, in his deep Scotch voice.

'Yes, Mr Ayling, we know you, of course,' answered the senior judge (every one in Kimberley knew David Ayling), 'and I am, with my colleagues, anxious to get at all the evidence available before completing the case. This is somewhat irregular, but, upon the whole, I think you had better be sworn and state what you have to say.'

David went to the witness-box and was sworn. 'This crocodile skin here,' he went on, pointing to the skin, which was handed up to him, 'I happen to know very well. I have examined it carefully before your lordship came in; it is small, and of rather peculiar shape, especially about the head. I remember that skin well, and can swear to it; there are not many like it knocking about. That skin was put on to my wagon in Kimberley seventeen months ago, and was carried by me to the Mahalapsi River.'

The court had become intensely interested as the trader spoke, the judges and magistrate pricked up their ears and looked intently, first at the skin, then at David.

'Go on,' said the judge.

'Well, my lord,' resumed David, 'the skin was put on to my wagon in February of last year, by Sam Vesthrein, a Jew storekeeper, in a small way in Beaconsfield. There were some other odds and ends put on the wagon, little lots of goods, which I delivered in Barkly West. But the crocodile skin, Sam Vesthrein said, was a bit of a curio, and he particularly

wanted it left at some friend's place farther up-country. I was in a hurry at the time, and forgot to take the name, but Sam said there was a label on the skin. The thing was pitched in with a lot of other stuff, and lay there for a long time. I lost sight of it till we had got to the Mahalapsi River, where the wagon was overturned in crossing. I off-loaded, and the crocodile skin then turned up with the label off. We were heavily laden; the skin was, I thought, useless; we were going on to the Zambesi, and I had clean forgotten where the skin ought to have been left. It seemed a useless bit of gear, so I just pitched it away in the bushes, in the very spot as near as I can make it, where Mr Farnborough's friend, Mr Kentburn, found it, nearly a year later, as he came down-country. That is one remarkable thing. I would like to add, my lord, that the Mahalapsi is a dry river, never running except in rains; and in all my experience, and I have passed it some scores of times, I never knew a crocodile up in that neighbourhood. The chances of there being any other crocodile skin in that sandy place and among those bushes, where Mr Kentburn found this one, would, I reckon, be something like a million (David pronounced it *milllion*) to one.

'There is one other point, my lords. Long after Sam Vesthrein delivered that skin on my wagon, I read in the newspapers that he had been arrested for I.D.B.—only a few weeks after I saw him—and sentenced to a term of imprisonment. I have been puzzling mightily over this case, and I must say, the more I think of it, the more unaccountable seems to me the fact of Sam Vesthrein sending that dried crocodile skin up-country. If it had been down-country, or to England, I could understand it; but in this case it seems very much like sending coals to Newcastle. I never knew that Sam was in the I.D.B. trade till I saw his imprisonment in the paper. I think he had some peculiar object in getting that skin out of his house. And I cannot help thinking, my lord, that Sam Vesthrein, if he could be found, could throw a good deal of light on this crocodile and diamond business. In fact, I'm sure of it. It's quite on the cards, to my thinking, that he put the diamond in that crocodile himself.'

Some questions were put to the witness by counsel for both sides, without adding to or detracting from the narrative in any way. The court seemed a good deal impressed by David's story, as indeed did the whole of the crowded audience, who had breathlessly listened to its recital. Mr Flecknoe, the detective, was called forward. He informed the court that Sam Vesthrein was now at Capetown undergoing a long term of imprisonment. He was no doubt at work on the Breakwater.

The senior judge was a man of decision, and he had quickly made up his mind. After a short whispered consultation with his colleagues, he spoke. 'The turn this case has taken is so singular, and the evidence given by Mr Ayling has imported so new an aspect, that in the prisoner's interest we are determined to have the matter sifted to the bottom. I will adjourn the court for a week, in order to secure the

convict Vesthrein's attendance here upon oath. Will this day week suit the convenience of all counsel in this case?'

Counsel intimated that the day of adjournment met their views, and once more the crowded court emptied. As David Ayling turned to leave, he caught Frank Farnborough's eye. He gave him a bright reassuring nod, and a wink which did him a world of good. Altogether Frank went back to another weary week's confinement in far better spirits than he had been for many days. There was, at all events, some slight element of hope and explanation now. And it was refreshing to him as a draught of wine, to find such a friend as David Ayling fighting his battle so stoutly, so unexpectedly.

Nina Staarbrucker stole silently out of the court, only anxious to get home, and escape observation. There were many eyes upon her, but she heeded them not at all. Thank God! there seemed some ray of light for Frank; for herself, whether Frank came out triumphantly or no, there was no outlook, all seemed blackness and gloom. Otto's part in this wretched business had made ruin of all her hopes. Her brother's treachery had determined her upon seeking a career of her own—work of some sort—anywhere away from Kimberley she must get, and get at once, so soon as the trial was over, and whatever its result.

Once more, in a week's time, the court wore its former aspect, the characters were all marshalled for the final act. The new addition to the caste, Mr Samuel Vesthrein, a lively, little, dark-visaged Jew of low type, seemed on the best of terms with himself. For more than fifteen months he had been hard at it on Capetown Breakwater, or road-scarping upon the breezy heights round the Cape peninsula—always, of course, under the escort of guards and the unpleasing supervision of loaded rifles—and really he needed a little rest and change. This trip to Kimberley was the very thing for him. What slight sense of shame he had ever had, had long since vanished under his recent hardening experiences; and as the little man looked round the crowded court, he saw the well-remembered faces of many a Kimberley acquaintance, and it did his heart good. He positively beamed again—in a properly subdued manner, of course.

The leading judge remarked to the advocates, 'Perhaps it will save the time of all if I put some questions to this witness myself.' The suggestion was gracefully received, and the judge turned to the little Jew, now attentive in the witness-box.

'Samuel, or Sam Vesthrein, you are a convict now undergoing a term of penal servitude at Capetown, I think?'

'Yeth, my lord.'

'It may perhaps tend slightly to lessen or mitigate the extreme term of your imprisonment if I receive perfectly truthful and straightforward answers to the questions I am going to ask. Be very careful, therefore. Any future recommendation on my part to the authorities will depend upon yourself.'

'Yeth, my lord,' answered Sam, in his most serious manner—and he meant it.

'About seventeen months ago you were in business in Beaconsfield, were you not?'

'Yeth, my lord.'

'Do you know Mr Ayling here?' pointing to the trader.

'I do, my lord.'

'Do you remember entrusting Mr Ayling with some goods about that time to take up-country?'

'I do, my lord.'

'What were they?'

'There were three cases of groceries to be delivered in Barkly West, and a crocodile skin to be left at the place of a friend of mine near Zeerust, in Marico, Transvaal.'

'Take that skin in your hands.' The crocodile was handed up like a baby. 'Do you recognise it?'

'Yeth, my lord, that is the identical skin, I believe, that I handed to Mr Ayling.'

'Now, be careful. Was there anything inside that crocodile skin?'

The little Jew saw now exactly which way the cat jumped, and he saw, too, that only the truth could be of use to him in the weary days and years yet to come on Capetown Breakwater. The court was hushed by this time to an absolute silence. You could have heard almost a feather fall.

'Well, my lord,' the little Jew replied, 'there *wath* something inside that crocodile. I had had a little bit of a speculation, and there was a big diamond inside the crocodile skin. I put it there myself. You see, my lord,' he went on rapidly, 'I had been doing one or two little transactions in stones, and I fancied there was something in the air, and so I put away that diamond and packed it off in the crocodile skin, safe, as I thought, to a friend in the Transvaal. It was a risk, but just at that time it was the only way out of the difficulty. I meant to have had an eye on the skin again, myself, a few days after, but I had a little difficulty with the police and I was prevented.'

As Sam Vestheim finished, Frank could have almost hugged him for the news he brought. An irrepressible murmur of relief ran round the crowded court, a murmur that the usher was for a minute or two powerless to prevent. The judge whispered to an attendant. The diamond was produced and handed to the Jew. 'Do you recognise that stone?' said the judge.

'I do, my lord,' answered Vestheim emphatically. 'That is the stone I put inside the crocodile. I could swear to it among a thousand.' The little man's eyes gleamed pleasantly yet regretfully upon the gem as he spoke.

Here, then, was the mystery of the fatal, puzzling diamond cleared up. There were few more questions to ask. The little Jew frankly admitted that the stone was a De Beer's stone, stolen by a native worker; there was little else to learn. Frank was a free man, practically, as he stood there, jaded and worn, yet at least triumphant. It was a dear triumph though, only snatched from disaster by the merest chance in the world—the coming of David Ayling. And the tortures, the agonies he had

suffered in these last few weeks of suspense! He knew that nothing—the kindly congratulations of friends, the tenderer affection of relations, the hearty welcome of a well-nigh lost world—none of these good things could ever quite repay him, ever restore to him what he had lost.

In a very few minutes Frank had been discharged from custody. The judges in brief, sympathetic speeches, congratulated him on his triumphant issue from a very terrible ordeal, and trusted that the applause and increased respect of his fellow-citizens would in some slight degree make up to him for his undoubted sufferings.

Frank left the court, arm in arm with David Ayling, whom he could not sufficiently thank for his timely and strenuous assistance. A troop of friends escorted him to the Transvaal Hotel, where his health was drunk in the hearty Kimberley way with innumerable congratulations. All this was very gratifying, as was the magnificent dinner which a number of friends gave to him a day or two later, at which half Kimberley assisted. But, for the present, Frank desired only to be left severely alone, with the quieter greetings of his few most intimate friends. He was still half stunned and very unwell; some weeks or months must elapse before he should be himself again.

One of his first inquiries was after Nina Staarbrucker, whom he wished sincerely to thank for her brave and honest defence of him at the trial. He learned, with a good deal of surprise, that she had left Kimberley on the morning after the trial, alone. He learned too, with less surprise, that Otto had quitted the town on urgent business in the Transvaal, and was not likely to return for some time. Beyond these bare facts, he could gather little or nothing of Nina and her whereabouts. He rather suspected she had gone to some relations near Capetown, but for the present her address was undiscoverable.

Very shortly after the result of the trial, Frank Farnborough was granted by his company six months' leave of absence, with full pay in the meantime. It was felt that the young man had been injured cruelly by his imprisonment, and that some atonement was due to him; and the Great Diamond Company he served, not to be behind in the generous shake of the hand, which all Kimberley was now anxious to extend to a hardly used man, was not slow in giving practical manifestation of a public sympathy. The stolen stone had been proved a De Beer's diamond, and Frank, its unfortunate temporary owner, had not only been deprived of a valuable find, but for his innocent ownership had suffered terribly in a way which no honest man could ever possibly forget. In addition, therefore, to his grant of leave of absence and full salary, Frank was handed a cheque for five hundred pounds, being, roughly, a half share of the value of the recovered gem.

Frank at once set out upon an expedition on which he had long fixed his mind—a hunting trip to the far interior. His preparations were soon made, and, a few weeks later,

he was enjoying his fill of sport and adventure in the wild country north-east of the Transvaal, at that time a veldt swarming with great game.

After three months came the rains, and with the rains, fever—fever, too, of a very dangerous type. Frank turned his wagon for the Limpopo River, and, still battling with the pestilence, kept up his shooting so long as he had strength. At last came a time when his drugs were conquered, the fever held him in a death-like grip, and he lay in his kartel gaunt, emaciated, weak, almost in the last stage of the disease. The fever had beaten him, and he turned his face southward and trekked for civilisation.

The wagons—he had a friendly trader with him by this time—had crossed the Limpopo and outspanned one hot evening in a tiny Boer village, the most remote of the rude frontier settlements of the Transvaal Republic. Frank, now in a state of collapse, was lifted from his wagon and carried into the back room of the only store in the place—a rude wattle and daub shanty thatched with grass. He was delirious, and lay in high fever all that night. In the morning he seemed a trifle better, but not sensible of those about him. At twelve o'clock he was once more fast in the clutches of raging fever; his temperature ran up alarmingly; he rambled wildly in his talk; at this rate it seemed that life could not long support itself in so enfeebled a frame.

Towards sundown, the fever had left him again; he lay in a state of absolute exhaustion, and presently fell into a gentle sleep. The trader, who had tended him day and night for a week, now absolutely wearied out, sought his own wagon and went to sleep. The store-keeper had retired, only a young woman, passing through the place, a governess on her way to some Dutchman's farm, watched by the sick man's bed.

It was about an hour after midnight, the African dawn had not yet come, but the solitary candle shed a fainter light; a cock crew, the air seemed to become suddenly more chill. The woman rose from her chair, fetched a light kaross* from the store, and spread it gently over the sick man's bed. Then she lifted his head—it was a heavy task—and administered some brandy and beef-tea. Again the young man slept, or lay in torpor. Presently the girl took his hand in her right, then sitting close to his bedside she, with her left, gently stroked his brow and hair. A sob escaped her. She kissed the listless, wasted hand; then with a little cry she half rose, bent herself softly and kissed tenderly, several times, the brow and the hollow, wasted cheek of the fever-stricken man. As she did so, tears escaped from her eyes and fell gently, all unheeded, upon Frank's face and pillow.

'Oh, my love, my love!' cried the girl, in a sobbing whisper, 'to think that never again can I speak to you, take your hand in mine! To think that I, who would have died for you, am now ashamed as I touch you—ashamed for the vile wrong that was done to you in those miserable days. My love, my darling, I must

now kiss you like a thief. Our ways are apart, and the journey—my God—is so long.'

Once more, leaning over the still figure, she kissed Frank's brow, and then, relapsing into her chair, cried silently for a while—a spasmodic sob now and again evincing the bitter struggle within her. The cold gray of morning came, and still she sat by the bedside, watching intently, unweariedly, each change of the sick man's position, every flicker of the tired eyes.

During the long hours of the two next days, Frank lay for the most part in a torpor of weakness. The fever had left him; it was now a struggle between death and the balance of strength left to a vigorous constitution after such a bout. Save for an hour or so at a time, Nina had never left his side. Hers was the gentle hand that cooled the pillows, shifted the cotton Kaffir blankets that formed the bedding, gave the required nourishment, and administered the medicine. On the evening of the fourth day, there were faint symptoms of recovery; the weakened man seemed visibly stronger. Once or twice he had feebly opened his eyes and looked about him—apparently without recognition of those at hand.

It was in the middle of this night that Frank really became conscious. He had taken some nourishment, and after long lying in a state betwixt sleep and stupor, he awoke to feel a tender stroking of his hand. Presently his brow was touched lightly by soft lips. It reminded him of his mother in years gone by. Frank was much too weak to be surprised at anything, but he opened his eyes and looked about him. It was not his mother's face that he saw, as he had dreamily half expected, but the face of one he had come to know almost as well.

Close by him stood Nina Staarbrucker, much more worn, much graver, much changed from the sweet, merry, piquant girl he had known so well at Kimberley. But the dark friendly eyes—very loving, yet sad and beseeching, it seemed to him dimly—of the lost days, were still there for him.

Frank opened his parched lips and in a husky voice whispered, 'Nina!'

'Yes,' said the sweet, clear voice he remembered so well, 'I am here, nursing you. You must not talk. No, not a word,' as he essayed to speak again, 'or you will undo all the good that has been done. Rest, my darling (I can't help saying it,' she said to herself; 'it will do no harm, and he will never hear it again from my lips); sleep again, and you will soon be stronger.'

Frank was still supremely weak, and the very presence of the girl seemed to bring peace and repose to his senses. He smiled—closed his eyes again, and slept soundly far into the next day.

That was the last he ever saw of Nina Staarbrucker. She had vanished, and although Frank, as he grew from convalescence to strength, made many inquiries as the months went by, he could never succeed in gaining satisfactory tidings of her. He once heard that she had been seen in Delagoa Bay, that was all. Whether in the years to come they will

* A fur cloak or rug.

ever meet again, time and the fates alone can say. It seems scarcely probable. Africa is vast, and nurses safely within her bosom the secret of many a lost career.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

WHAT has been rather inaptly called the New Photography has had some curious developments during the past few weeks. It has been found by Mr Herbert Jackson, of King's College, London, that by using a Crooke's tube of particular form with a reflector of platinum supported in its centre, the X-rays can be brought, as it were, to a focus, or perhaps it would be more correct to say that the shadow picture afforded by such a tube is much better defined than with the apparatus formerly employed. It is also an important feature that the time necessary for taking one of these shadow pictures is, with this new tube, reduced from about twenty minutes to two. It is evident that this reduction in the time of exposure will make this system available for many surgical purposes.

Another curious development of the X-ray marvel has been found in the fact that, by using a screen coated with a certain fluorescent compound, the shadow pictures need not be submitted to the action of a photographic plate, but can be seen by the eye direct. Professor Salvioni, of Perugia, was the first to point this out, and experiments in London have corroborated his observations. By using a screen covered with potassic-platino-cyanide, Mr Herbert Jackson has shown that the bones of the hand, foot, elbow, &c. can not only be seen, but can actually be seen in movement. The method he adopts is to place the object to be viewed between the radiant matter tube and the fluorescent screen in a dark room; the shadow then becomes evident on the screen as a shadow might be projected upon a surface covered with luminous paint. In this way Mr Jackson has already viewed the spinal bones in a living human body, and he looks forward, at an early date, to viewing in the same manner the entire skeleton.

From observations made at some ironworks in Germany, it seems evident that the chimney of a blast-furnace, while such a furnace is in action, needs no protection by a lightning-conductor. Even if it be furnished with that metallic tie between the clouds and the earth, the electricity will prefer to avoid it, and to take advantage of the easier path afforded by the heated air. Again and again has it been noted at these works that the lightning will take a path right through the chimney shaft and through the molten metal to the earth beneath without doing any damage whatever. The explanation may be found in the circumstance that the column of smoke proceeding from such a chimney contains much water and carbon dust in suspension, and that this smoke, extending as it does to a great height above the chimney shaft, forms a far better conductor than the small copper tape outside the brickwork.

Dr John Murray, of the *Challenger* Expedition,

recently gave a very interesting lecture at the Royal Institution on Marine Organisms. He showed that temperature was a far more important factor in the distribution of these lower organisms than in the case of warm-blooded and air-breathing animals on *terra firma*. The surface waters of the ocean had five well-marked temperature areas. First, there were the Arctic and Antarctic regions with very low temperatures; next, a tropical belt of small range but with high temperature; and there remained two intermediate areas where the annual ranges of temperature were great. The ocean might be divided into two great divisions, the upper one reaching to a depth of one hundred fathoms, and the lower one, a still region where plants were absent, but where animal life was abundant. The lecturer supposed that the various facts in the distribution of marine organisms might be explained by supposing that in early geological times there was not only a uniform climate over the entire globe, but an almost universal fauna and flora.

A French process for giving to iron a rustless coating is carried out in the following manner. The article to be treated is placed in a gas retort, and raised to a temperature of about six hundred degrees centigrade, when a current of hydrogen is turned into the retort for forty-five minutes, after which a small quantity of naphtha is introduced for ten minutes. The hydrogen charge is now repeated for another fifteen minutes, and the process is complete. The effect of this treatment is to give the iron a bluish coating of carbide, which, it is said, is so strongly adherent to the metal, that it can be freely bent about without any disturbance of the rustless coat.

Several serious accidents have been recorded from flywheels, while revolving at a high speed, breaking into fragments and spreading death and destruction on every side; a result brought about by the centrifugal force exerted by the revolving mass overcoming its tensile strength. A new kind of flywheel has lately been erected at the Mannesman Tube Company's Works in Germany, which is specially designed to run at very high speeds without risk of such a disaster as that just referred to. The new wheel has a massive cast-iron hub or boss, to either side of which is strongly bolted a disc about twenty feet in diameter. The arrangement thus represents a huge but very narrow reel in proportion to its diameter. The space between the discs is wound with no less than seventy tons of steel wire, which has a tensile strength far beyond that possessed by any casting. This immense mass of metal is driven at a speed of two hundred and forty revolutions per minute, which gives a velocity to any point on its rim of about two and a half miles a minute, that is to say, about three times the speed of an express train. The wire employed in this novel form of flywheel is No. 5, and its estimated length is two hundred and fifty miles.

Edison's beautiful optical instrument, the Kinetoscope, has now become familiar to most people through its exhibition in various large towns. By means of it, a photograph, or rather a series of photographs, constitutes a marvellous

living picture, and the only drawback to the effect produced is the very small scale of the pictures. It has therefore been the endeavour of many inventors to adapt the mechanism of the Kinetoscope to the optical or magic lantern, so that the original pictures, which are not more than one inch in length, can be magnified to several feet. This has been done with more or less success by M.M. Lumière of Paris, and the apparatus is now being exhibited in London. What we may call the action of the pictures thus exhibited is most realistic. In one instance, a busy railway station is shown, a train is seen approaching, it draws up at the platform, the carriage-doors open, the passengers alight and talk with one another, and the guard steps forward and signals the engine-driver to proceed on his journey. It is evident that this apparatus when perfected will be as much valued by artists as a means of studying motion, as it is by mere amusement-seekers; but the assertion that one day we shall be able, by means of these projected pictures in association with the phonograph, to reproduce operas and other dramatic representations, is at present, to say the least, premature.

An English steamer, the *Scandia*, was recently overtaken by a terrific storm in mid-Atlantic, and the captain, having no store of oil on board which he could throw on the troubled waters, tried the effect of soapsuds, and, it is said, with the greatest success. The effect was instantaneous, the height of the waves being immediately diminished and their crests being less threatening. The captain of a French vessel is also reported to have employed soap solution with similar success. He used three kilogrammes of soap dissolved in seventy litres of water, and dropping the mixture over the bows of his ship, insured a quiet pathway for it ten yards wide.

It is reported that there is some chance of a union between the Panama and Nicaragua Canal Companies; and the proposed arrangement, including as it does a fusion of French and American interests, is regarded with favour by those most interested in the matter. Under such an arrangement the Nicaragua Company would purchase the machinery and assets generally of the Panama Company, and the construction of a canal over the Nicaragua route would be rapidly pushed forward. It is considered that only one canal is needed to accommodate the ships which are now compelled to go round Cape Horn. The notion of piercing this isthmus is a very old one, and many lives have been lost and much treasure has been expended in the endeavour to carry out the enterprise. It is certain that the work will be accomplished some day with success, and this union of the two companies which have formerly been rivals, seems a step in a forward direction.

Hitherto marine glue has been the only satisfactory cement for joining glass; it would withstand the action of water and acids, but heat would cause it to give way. It is now reported that Mr Charles Margot has produced a metallic solder for glass, consisting of ninety-five parts of tin and five of zinc, which melts at two hundred degrees, and becomes firmly adherent to that material. An alloy

of ninety parts tin and ten of aluminium melts at three hundred and ninety degrees and becomes a still stronger solder for glass. It is asserted that with these alloys it is as easy to solder two pieces of glass together as pieces of metal. Of course, certain precautions are necessary, for we all know that glass suddenly heated will inevitably crack. The pieces to be joined should be carefully heated in a furnace, and the parts to be connected rubbed with a rod of solder, and this can be then evenly distributed as it melts, with a rod of wood or paper.

Mr Arthur Stenhouse, in a letter to the *Scotsman*, describes the process of ore treatment and gold recovery in the Transvaal, by means of which at least ninety-five per cent. of the gold in the ore can be recovered, this method more than anything else having made recent gold-mining so successful. The three stages of progress are milling, concentrating, and cyaniding. As to the first process, when the rocks are hoisted out, they are sorted, the waste rock is thrown aside, while the gold-bearing ore is broken into lumps, and passes by gravitation and feeders through a battery, or stamp-mill, each stamp of which weighs about eleven hundred and fifty pounds. A stream of water is introduced, and the ore is crushed into fine sand, carried over a series of inclined copper plates, which are coated with quicksilver. The free gold in the sand amalgamates with the quicksilver, and the sand-laden stream continues its course, and passes on to the concentrators, which retain the heavy sand, while the lighter passes to the cyanide vats. A solution of cyanide of potassium is pumped into these sand vats, which dissolves the gold, leaving pure sand alone in the vat. This gold solution, after it leaves the vat, being led into a series of boxes filled with zinc shavings, the gold separates from the liquid, and settles on the zinc shavings in the shape of a small black powder.

In the battery, the copper plates are scraped daily, and the quicksilver and gold is weighed and placed in the safe. The quicksilver is afterwards evaporated, and the gold residue smelted into bars. The 'concentrates' are usually roasted, so that iron may be separated from the gold. The gold from the zinc shavings is also recovered by retorting, the produce when melted being known as 'cyanide gold.'

A curious calculation with reference to the power exerted by, and the life of, big guns, is given in a recent number of the *Scientific American*. The Italian 100-ton gun (model of 1879), with a charge of five hundred and fifty pounds of powder, ejects an enormous projectile at an initial velocity of 1715 feet per second, which is equal to seventeen million horse-power exerted for about the hundredth part of a second. Modern guns give to their projectiles an initial velocity of just upon two thousand feet per second, equal, when the weight of the ball is taken into consideration, to twenty-four million horse-power exerted for the same time. But, unfortunately, after a few of these gigantic efforts the constitution of the 'infants' is undermined; the ephemera are longer lived in comparison, for whereas those

active organisms have at least a summer day's life, the big gun has lived out its allotted span after the time required for the discharge of about one hundred shots.

Asbestos wool, compressed by the hydraulic pump to a thin sheet and waterproofed on one side, is recommended by an American inventor for the middle soles of boots and shoes. It is said that such a compound sole will protect the wearer from all the ills which are supposed to be associated with the access of heat, cold, and moisture to the feet.

Lord Armstrong has recently made some very curious photo-electrical experiments by means of a Winshurst machine. This machine is caused to charge two large condensing jars, and the brush discharge from these latter, just before the tension rises sufficiently to produce an actual spark, is made to impinge upon a very sensitive gelatine plate. The operation is conducted in a dark room, and in the absence of either camera or lens, but the result on each plate employed is a most beautiful arborescent pattern, which is varied in each picture by modifying the conditions of the discharge. Very beautiful effects are also produced by using a simple plate of glass which, after being waxed, is covered with a very delicate layer of fine dust; by the action of the discharge, this dust is made to assume various curious figures. It is well known that Nature endows the lowliest organisms with most perfect form and intricate adornment, but it is curious to note that beauty of design should accompany even the phenomena connected with a discharge of electricity.

The United States Navy Department has recently adopted a form of machine gun which is known as the Colt Automatic, and it is made by the Colt Company of Hartford, Conn. It stands on a tripod, and has a weight of only forty pounds, so that a horseman can carry it in a boot behind his saddle, and even a bicyclist can mount one without much difficulty. This gun will give a continuous fire of four hundred shots per minute for an indefinite time, and in a recent test for accuracy, at two hundred yards, made one hundred hits on a target the size of a man, in sixteen seconds. The cartridges are fed to the gun by a belt, and any kind of ammunition may be used. The expansion of gas during one discharge works the necessary mechanism for the next.

The *British Medical Journal* lately reminded its readers that while micro-organisms are the great producers of disease, dust is the great medium by which those organisms are carried from place to place. The housemaid in sweeping a carpet, especially when she kneels down to do so with a short brush, is stirring up this dust to the detriment of every one in the house, and breathing germ-laden particles to her own destruction. If carpets must be used—and they are unhealthy things at the best—a patent sweeper should be used with plenty of damp tea leaves. What is much better than carpet is a floor-covering like linoleum which can be wiped with a damp cloth; this is far healthier than any fabric which can hold in its meshes microbe-bearing dust.

The demand for wood-pulp by the paper

factories is now so great that, to meet it, the destruction of timber is positively alarming. It is said that the *Petit Journal* of Paris—we do not know why this particular newspaper should be picked out for illustration—consumes paper which is equivalent to the annual sacrifice of one hundred and twenty thousand trees, or a clearance of twenty-five thousand acres of timber land. If this be true of a single journal, it is difficult to imagine how the demands of all the others can possibly be satisfied except on the supposition that many other kinds of fibre beyond that afforded by wood are being requisitioned by the paper-maker. It is believed that within a few years the growth of timber to supply the needs of literature will be quite as important as its production for constructive purposes. It is perhaps a fortunate thing that iron and concrete are so rapidly usurping the place of wood as building materials.

'PADDY'S' WIFE.

By JOHN MACKIE.

Author of *The Devil's Playground* and *Sinners Twain*.

CHAPTER I.

Mislike me not for my complexion,
The shadow'd livery of the burnished sun.
Merchant of Venice.

FOUR riders, each one leading a packhorse, had come to a swollen, swift-flowing river in the Never-Never country of the Carpentarian Gulf, and prepared to cross.

A blackfellow called 'Paddy' was the first to plunge his horses into the flood and successfully accomplish the passage. A white stockman called Clements was the next to land safely on the other side. Then a black gin named Katie, wife of the aforesaid 'Paddy,' urged her horses into the tawny-crested waters as fearlessly as either the latter or the stockman had done. But the packhorse was heavily burdened, so in mid-stream it suddenly took fright, reared, pawed the water wildly, and went round in a circle. Katie, who was like a fish in the water, released her grip on the mane of her riding horse, leaving it to reach the opposite bank by itself. With one powerful side-stroke she swam in upon the struggling, overburdened animal; caught and clung to its long mane on the off side, and tried to guide it to the opposite shore. The sound of her voice and her prompt action quietened the brute, when suddenly catching sight of a drifting log, which it probably mistook for an alligator, it reared and lashed out again with its fore-feet. Then an unshod hoof struck the black woman on the head, and her body drifted down with the current.

In another minute, however, Alec Paterson the squatter, who was the last of the party to essay the swim, had ridden his horses into the river; left them in mid-stream to finish the journey by themselves, and swam down hand over hand to where the gin had disappeared. He dived once, twice, three times; at last he caught sight of the woman as she came to the surface, and caught her before she sank again. He was a strong swimmer, so in a few minutes had towed his burden to the opposite shore, and laid it on the bank. The

first thing he did was to restore respiration by artificial means. The next, when he saw that the woman was regaining consciousness, was to call on the stockman pretty sharply to continue the process, while he—Alec Paterson—went up to the black husband 'Paddy,' who had been watching the entire proceedings with an air of apathetic unconcern, and surprised that worthy by pulling him off his horse, and kicking him soundly. Alec Paterson never did anything by halves.

'You cold-blooded villain,' he said, with a notion of frightening Paddy, 'I've a good mind to take Katie from you.'

'Humph!' snorted the blackfellow contemptuously, 'me no care s'posen' you do that; plenty more sit down alonga bush.'

Just then, however, Katie regained consciousness; heard her lord's chivalrous speech; saw him trying to dodge Mr Paterson's boot a second time, and smiled despite her sick and dazed condition.

CHAPTER II.

Alec Paterson was the pioneer of that wild Never-Never country which lay between the salt-pans and the ranges to the west of the one hundred and thirty-eighth degree of eastern longitude. As yet his nearest white neighbour was in Queensland, some fifty miles distant; moreover, the mountain blacks, and those that infested the mangrove-fringed rivers on the low-lying northern seaboard, marked their disapproval of his presence by occasionally spearing his cattle and horses, cutting the fencing wire to make spear-heads with, and otherwise annoying him. But, still, as Alec Paterson said, they were a cowardly lot at the best, for they always carefully avoided coming in contact with the whites. It was therefore not an unnatural thing that in time Alec Paterson and his stockmen began to hold their enemies somewhat cheap, and to neglect those precautions the disregard of which has cost so many settlers in wild new countries their lives.

Alec Paterson had married the cultured daughter of a well-to-do Sydney merchant in '81, some two years previous to his coming up to the Gulf country. He had left her behind in Brisbane, until such time as he could get ready a fitting home for her in the land of promise he was going to; but when he first saw it his heart sank within him. However, during his spare time he and his men built a rough but comfortable dwelling-house; and then he wrote her to say that as there was not a white woman within a hundred and fifty miles of them, he could not think of bringing her to such a place. But Mrs Paterson was not to be put off like this, so within two months she and her child had arrived at Burketown in Queensland, where the maid-servant she had brought with her promptly accepted the best of four offers of marriage she received within as many days of her arrival, and became the wife of the principal storekeeper. But Mrs Paterson was not easily discouraged, and so a few weeks found her with her husband upon the cattle station.

When Alec Paterson looked at the dainty, delicate figure of his wife, and then around at

the crude attempts at carpentering which characterised their sitting-room, he bit his lip with a sense of mortification. How could he have been such a fool as to suppose that a girl who had been accustomed to every luxury could exist in such a Crusoe's cave? This was surely what they called a man's selfishness.

'However you're to exist, my dear, in a place like this, without another white woman, I don't know. I'm sorry I didn't send you back with the next boat when at Burketown. It was just like me not to think of it sooner.'

But she only laughed at him.

'Nonsense,' she said; 'it's a capital little house; what with the roll of calico we brought with us, you won't know it for the same place in another fortnight. This is just the sort of thing I always had a fancy for. If you could only manage to let one of those black women come over and help me a little every day, until I get things straight, I should be perfectly happy. Your Chinaman, Sue Lee, is an excellent cook, and upon the whole I think we'll get along very well.'

Paddy's wife, Katie, was no Venus when judged by the white man's standard of beauty—she was black but not comely. Still that did not prevent her evincing something more than mere respect for the only man who was not afraid to kick the arch-tyrant Paddy. Her ethics were based upon the simple doctrine that it was as well to do unto others as they did by you. When Mrs Paterson arrived at the station, beyond a furtive series of peeps, born of an irresistible curiosity in regard to the outward appearance of the 'white Mary,' Katie had shown a decided disposition to sulk. Afterwards when Mr Paterson with awakened interest pondered over whatever associations he had with her, he remembered that, previous to his going to Burketown to fetch up his wife and child, he had told Katie of his purpose, expressing the hope that she would welcome the white sister and endeavour to be of some use to her. Whereupon the black woman, who had been seated on the ground sharpening a 'yam-stick' by the aid of a piece of broken glass, rose to her feet, looked at him in an incomprehensible way, and marched off in evident dudgeon, somewhat mystifying the simple-minded young squatter.

It was only when Mrs Paterson with the child in her arms went over to Katie's hut in Paddy's absence, that she succeeded in overcoming the black woman's evident antipathy to her.

When the white woman had entered the tiny bark hut, which was innocent of doors or window-frames, she found the black gin squatted on a rug spread on the clay floor; she was evidently brooding over something, and did not seem to notice her visitor. The expression on her face was not inviting; indeed, some would have hesitated before addressing her. But Mrs Paterson was equal to the occasion.

'Katie,' she said pleasantly, in that peculiar pigeon-English used between blacks and whites, 'you come look out this-one white piccaninny.'

And going over to where the gin sat with sullen averted face, she knelt down beside her, holding out the white-faced child, whose big blue eyes, so like its father's, seemed to stare so wonderingly upon the world. Katie stopped

short in the 'baal budgerie' of pettishness that rose to her lips, and the look of anger on her face gave way to one of curiosity. The child crowed and shot out his fat little arms towards her. With an inarticulate cry of pleasure and tenderness Katie clasped her hands together, while her plain face became beautiful with the light that shone upon it.

Alec Paterson had often been filled with wonder to witness the solicitude which those wife-beating blacks displayed towards their dogs; but he was hardly prepared for the devotion which the savage woman exhibited for the white child. Katie, indeed, had become a changed creature. She would bustle around the house all day, making herself useful, in order that she might be allowed to nurse the child for a few minutes. When Alec Paterson saw that Paddy's domestic comfort was suffering in consequence, he spoke to his wife.

'My dear,' he said, 'you must really try and do with less of Katie, or some fine day you'll find that she has disappeared into the bush and taken something with her.'

This frightened the mother; but when one day Paddy, without any warning whatever, flung off the livery of a hateful civilisation, and cast in his lot with the neighbouring blacks, leaving his wife behind him, Mrs Paterson's sympathy for Katie was aroused and her faith in her restored.

But Alec Paterson only remarked, 'I wouldn't wonder if that beggar Paddy's up to some mischief. I'd advise you to keep an eye on the gin, and see that she has no communication with the outside blacks—that's the secret of half the massacres.'

CHAPTER III.

The blacks had been killing cattle at the south end of the run, and the squatter was obliged to go off in a hurry, leaving Clements the stockman and the Chinaman cook to keep an eye on the station, and those in it who were dear to him, in his absence.

Mrs Paterson sat under the bark roof of the veranda, while the child, resting in a hammock, with Katie bending and crooning over it, were alongside her. The glaring intensity of the fierce sunlight had begun to soften as the shadows crept towards the east. Suddenly a strange bird called from a thicket of golden wattle. Katie started when she heard it, and then crooned on as before. In a few minutes the strange bird called again. Then the black woman yawned with a delightful absence of restraint, and remarked: 'Me plenty tired now, missis. Thinkit me go alonga hut.'

But when Katie left she did not enter the hut; she only sauntered round by the back of the house, and stole off into the bush like a shadow. And there was no one to connect her disappearance with the cry of that wild bird.

Night, and the white mother with the child by her side lying in the partially darkened room, while outside the thousand and one voices of the tropical night created a strange medley of sound.

With a cat-like stealth a shadowy figure

crept into the room, approached the bedside of the sleepers, and paused a minute as if irresolute. It was Katie the black gin. Through the shutterless casement a broad shaft of subdued light streamed into the room, throwing the woman and child into relief. For a minute the face of the black woman darkened as she looked upon the face of the sleeping mother. But in another moment she had looked upon the sleeping child, who only a few hours before had cried with delight as he threw out his chubby little arms, and looked up trustingly into her dark face.

'Missis, Missis,' cried the gin impulsively, shaking the sleeper with something almost like fierceness. 'S—sh! Get up—get up—you put'm on dress and come 'longa me.'

'Katie!' cried Mrs Paterson, in no little alarm as she awakened out of her sleep, and with a dawning sense of the horrible truth, 'what is the matter? Is it the?'

'Myall (wild) blackfellow come up alonga station in the morning. You come where blackfellow no find'm you. Quick—put'm on cloes.'

The black gin led the white woman, who carried the child in her arms, out by a back way, and then in cover of a clump of bushes into the forest. Mrs Paterson had wanted to warn the others in the station, but Katie insisted on having her own way. 'Blackfellow no come up till morning,' she explained; 'after a little bit me leave'm you, and then me go back tell'm alonga station.'

Up the sandy tortuous bed of a dry creek the black woman led the white. Soon they had reached the mountain-side, and entered a little gully shrouded by a wealth of feather-palms and tree-ferns.

'You stop here till me come again,' said the dusky daughter of the woods, as, stooping down, she lifted one of the rounded little hands of the child and pressed it against her cheek. Then like some spirit of the night she disappeared noiselessly.

CHAPTER IV.

It is the darkest hour in all the twenty-four, which precedes the one when the pale lemon glow struggles into the eastern sky, and the voices of the night cease. Already the scattered buildings of the cattle station loom up mysteriously to an abnormal size; but there is nothing to hint at the tragedy which overshadows it.

In the paddock, slowly advancing on the station buildings, a large number of wicked-looking blacks flit from tree to tree as noiselessly and, seemingly, as unsubstantial as shadows. In their hands are cruel barbed spears and other weapons. And now as they approach nearer the squatter's house, some of them get down on their hands and knees, while others lie flat on their faces, and wriggle along like snakes. At last some of the bolder spirits actually stand under the veranda of the dwelling-house.

For a second or two they pause to listen, but nothing save the foolish croak of a belated frog down by the creek disturbs the stillness. Suddenly three little jets of light, like blood-red flashes of fire, spurt from loopholes in the side of the slab-built house, and a hideous roar

echoes through the woods—a strange heralding for the tropical dawn. At the same moment, three savages drop to earth like pole-axed bullocks. Katie had kept her word; she had gone back to the station and given the alarm.

Then a grim little siege began; the besieged being a white man, a Chinaman, and a black woman. Time and again did the savages try to rush the house; but the stockman's Winchester did deadly work, and Sue Lee's double-barrelled fowling-piece, loaded with slugs, was something to be reckoned with. But the blacks were evidently bent on extermination, and kept pressing on from behind. It was only a question of time with the little garrison. And then as the bright-eyed goddess of the morn fared forth, and the sun as if on tip-toe peeped over the tree-tops, a hissing, crackling, ruddy shaft of flame shot up from the bark roof of the doomed house. The grimed and hard-pressed three could not stand the terrible heat much longer. *Crash!* down came a ponderous tie-beam and a sheet of bark from the roof, sending a shower of sparks in all directions. How peacefully the blue sky looked down upon them through that fire-fringed rent!

Then the Christian white man, the disciple of Confucius, and the heathen woman, knew that the time was come when they must needs leave the burning house, and go outside to face what Fate might have in store for them. And it would have been hard to decide, judging by appearances, which of them went out to face the problem of eternity most readily.

When Alec Paterson and his men rode down upon the station a few hours later, they found only the little storehouse intact amid the smoking ruins of the other buildings. When the three hard-pressed ones had been driven from the burning dwelling-house, they had fought their way to it, and there made a final and effectual stand. The blacks, at last despairing of dislodging them, had taken themselves off, carrying with them most of their dead and wounded. Clements, the white stockman, now sat outside, propped up with his back to the wall, and his rifle resting across his knees. There was a spear wound in his right leg, and another in his left shoulder. With care he might pull through. As for poor Sue Lee, he now knew more than any white philosopher, for he had solved the great mystery. And as for Katie, the black gin, she knelt outside on the ground, pillowing the head of a dead savage upon her knees, and wailing over him. This savage was her old lord and tyrant, the arch-traitor Paddy. The spear wound in her side, that even now made her feel faint, had been dealt by him.

The squatter, who was afraid to ask Clements as to his wife and child when he saw the smouldering ruins of his home, rushed into the storehouse with a horrible fear in his heart. But there was no wife and child there—only, across the doorway, the body of Sue Lee with that look of contentment on his face.

In another moment the squatter feared the very worst. Like one who is beside himself with grief, he rushed outside, seized the gin by the arm, and pressed the muzzle of his revolver against

her cheek: 'Where are my wife and child?' he cried; 'where are they, you she-devil?'

The gin lifted her head and looked him boldly, scornfully in the eyes. 'Shoot, you fool!' she said by way of reply. 'You thinkit me like that? You thinkit black gin baal (is not) all a-same white Mary?'

He took the weapon from her cheek. 'When I think of it now, you didn't seem to take to her,' he said, 'and why, your own black heart only knows. But we'll drag the truth from you.'

He had not realised as yet—though he was soon to do so—that human nature as exemplified by the feminine mind is the same all the world over, and that nobility of soul may exist inside a black skin as well as under a white one.

When they tied her hands together, and made her walk in front of them for fear of treachery, she neither resisted nor murmured. Probably they had not guessed the reason of her faltering steps, as with a set and apathetic expression on her face she led them to the little gully in the mountain-side. Had they dreamt of the fact that a barbed spear-head was buried in her side, they would surely have acted differently. And there in that secluded spot, where the feathery fronds of palms meeting over their heads shut out the blue of heaven, the squatter found his wife and child waiting for him unharmed.

When Alec Paterson turned from them to their dark-skinned guide, it was too late; for Paddy's spear and the forced march had done their work, and she had gone to where her proud spirit would be better understood.

HOPE.

If thou art absent there is nought that cheers,
For life without thee hath no promise fair,
And love without thee is a lifelong care,
The certain pledge of agony and tears:
But thou hast magic to assuage my fears,
For thou art strong to battle with Despair,
And thou alone canst help a man to bear
The mournful silence of his lonely years.

Stay with me, angel of a better life
That I shall live when dream is shaped in deed;
Stay till I reap the harvest of the seed
Sown now love's passions and love's fears are rife;
And when I doubt the truth of love's blind creed,
Tell me the end is worthy all the strife.

PERCY GALLARD.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 644.—VOL. XIII.

SATURDAY, MAY 2, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF JOHN PERCIVAL.

By MRS OLIPHANT.

CHAPTER I.

JOHN PERCIVAL was the nephew of a banker in Edinburgh, destined from his childhood to the service of the bank—which was considered by all the family the greatest good luck that could have happened to a boy. His uncle, who like the boy was John Percival, and who was his godfather—or namefather, as we say in Scotland—as well as his uncle and his patron, and was connected with him by every possible tie, was a childless man—childless, too, in the most secure way, not an old bachelor who might marry at any moment, but a staid married man with a wife younger than himself, yet not so young as to be dangerous. He was, though the old man did not say so, nor do anything to raise expectations, universally considered as his uncle's heir; and did so consider himself calmly, without impatience or preoccupation with the subject, and very far from wishing to shorten his uncle's life by a single day. He was thought the most fortunate boy in the family; but I don't think he considered himself as such, and especially when he set out on a wintry day at noon in the stage-coach for Duntrum, a large provincial town in the south of Scotland. It may be divined that it was not to-day or yesterday, according to the popular phrase, when this journey took place: for nowadays one whisks off from Edinburgh to Duntrum in the morning, and whisks back again at night, having several hours in which to do one's business between, and no fatigue to speak of. It was very different in those days, when from noon to nearly midnight the coach joggled over the frost-bound country; and even in his corner in the interior, where John was forced to place himself by the anxieties of his elders, who kept up a pleasing fiction that he was delicate—

it was very difficult even under a pile of plaids and topcoats to keep warm. He was going to serve for a year in the bank at Duntrum to give him a knowledge of country business and the ways of rustic depositors and clients, a knowledge which John felt to be very unnecessary, seeing that his life was to be spent, not in Duntrum, but in Edinburgh, and at the least in the manager's office, not at the counter selling money as if it were tea or sugar. He did not like this change of scene at all, perhaps because the season was at its height in Edinburgh, and all the entertainments of the year hurrying upon each other; but chiefly because it was the sordid side of business, the lower part of the profession, as this foolish young man thought, which he was being sent to study. He did not appreciate the advantage of knowing everything connected with his trade, which the elders know so much better than the young people. Indeed, to tell the truth, he was not sure at all that he was fond of banking, or thought it every way so superior an employment as many people thought. His own opinion was that if he were left at peace to live upon his own little bit of money, and pursue his own tastes, he would be a much happier man. He had a notion, indeed, that he might possibly turn out a great painter or a great writer if he were thus left to himself to cultivate the best that was in him. It was a pity that he felt the possibilities were equal in respect to these two pursuits. It might be either which would bring him fame and fortune, but certainly one of them. If he had been sure that it was either this or that, there would have been more hope for John: but he was not sure—he thought at one time he could

have been a painter, had he time and encouragement to try, and then again another time that he could be a novelist or a poet. Perhaps on the whole it was just as well for him, that with such excellent prospects, and the certainty of coming to a good end, if he behaved himself, he should have been what he was—a banker's clerk.

But whatever it might end in eventually, it was very hard lines, he thought, that he should have to leave Edinburgh in the middle of the season when everything was in full swing. There was not much in those days, at least not the tenth part so much as now, of football and golf. These games were played, but they were not the essence of life. Strange to say, young men found other things to talk about, other things to occupy them which were not all deleterious. For one thing they took a great deal more interest in dances and all sorts of assemblies, in which the boys met with the girls of their own class, than the ordinary run of 'manly young fellows' do now. I suspect they fell in love much more freely than they do now. They wanted to meet, to talk to, to laugh with these girls, as they like now to make themselves comfortable in a smoking-room, or rave about breaking a record on the links. I do not say which is best, not knowing; but at least one must confess that it is quite different. It is possible that John had even more than one incipient flirtation on his hands. He did not at all like to leave, for a hum-drum provincial town near the Border, with all its local questions and prejudices which he would not understand, the cheerful bustle of Edinburgh, the gay assemblies and all the private entertainments that abounded at this cheerful time of the year.

'Good-bye, my boy: we'll see you back whenever there's anything great going on,' said one of the friends who were seeing him off. There was a little group of them round the coach door, bright-faced young men who had made a dart from the offices of several Writers to the Signet, or even from the Parliament House—to see the last of Percival, as they said.

'Perhaps,' said John with satirical bitterness, 'if well-founded information reaches the bank that the world is coming to an end.'

'In that case you may stay where you are,' said the other; 'we'll have enough to do thinking of ourselves. Hallo!' said this young man, feeling himself vigorously pushed aside from the coach door. This was the arrival of another passenger, by whom the group of young men were pushed aside to right and left by that free use of elbows and personal momentum, which an energetic woman of the lower orders uses with so little scruple. This was a strong and vigorous maid-servant of middle age and weighty person, leading a veiled and muffled personage who followed her closely, and who bore the aspect of an old lady afflicted with toothache or 'tic,' or one of those affections of the face which were then treated freely with enveloping wraps to keep out the cold, and external applications, and a total indifference to personal appearance. Indeed, in this case, as the face was entirely invisible, a thick veil of Spanish lace, in a large pattern of heavy

and close design, covering the small amount which was not entirely obliterated by plaster and poultice applied to the right cheek, there was not perhaps any inducement even to undying vanity to attempt modification or concealment. The identity of the veiled person it was quite impossible to divine—her wrapped-up head was like a melon, a 'sport' with one great bulge on the right side—a faint glimmer of an eye between the crevices of the lace pattern, a little colour, was all that was apparent; feature and form and expression were all lost in the portentous envelopments. She clung close to her protector with old and tremulous steps, and occasionally a faint waggle of the mis-shapen and enormous head.

'Can ye no see it's an auld leddy with the rheumatics in her head—and jist you get out of the way, my fine callants, that kenna what trouble is. Gang round to the other side of the coach if you have any more blethers to say. Steady, mem, steady! take your time, this is the town corner, the furdest frae the winds: and I'll pull up the window-glass, and ye'll not feel a breath. You'll jist be as safe as gin ye were in your auld chair with the wings at hame.'

During this speech, to which the young men listened awe-struck, the old lady was carefully and with much precaution hoisted into the coach, a process which seemed more difficult than her short stature and apparently insignificant figure seemed to justify, the stout woman-servant growing redder and redder under the strain, although assisted by a porter who pushed from behind. When the process was accomplished the boys burst into a genial but suppressed laugh, with significant looks at John, who for his part could not but regard with a certain fascination the mass of nodding headgear which was to be his companion in the long drive. He could not take his gaze from her. The cold journey to Duntrum leaving dinners and assemblies behind, was reason enough for despondency: but to travel with Medusa herself in a mail-coach! if by any chance the wrappings might come off, and her unfortunate fellow-passenger be turned to stone.

'I give you joy, Jack,' whispered one of the attendant youths; 'here's a bonny bride to bear you company.'

'I'll tell May Laurie you were in capital fettle; a fair lady by your side and plenty of time to make your court.'

'Nothing of the sort, Jack, my lad; I'll let her know you were preserved from every temptation,' cried another—all this in not quite inaudible whispers, at the other door.

John was glad when the coach finally started, leaving all these laughing faces behind; for he had a tender heart and was remorseful at the thought of perhaps wounding an old and suffering person for whom he had on the contrary the greatest compassion. True, it was dreadful to see that mis-shapen head nodding from the opposite corner, and to know that whatever happened he must be its companion for so many hours. A horrible doubt seized him whether it would be possible for her to go so far without occasion to change her poultice

or undo her ceremonies. He thought of the *Veiled Prophet*, then just published, and wondered whether he might not have some ghastly revelation to undergo like that of the horrified hero. He thought in spite of himself of ill-smelling ointments and other sickening appliances. Poor creature! it might be a question with her of ease from distracting pain, or she might go on suffering, unwilling to expose her inflamed cheek, or run the risk of disgusting her companion. Poor old body! John tried to turn his back on her, to keep his eyes diverted on the view from the opposite window: but there was a fascination in the unknown which drew him back. He stole glances at her against his will as if she had been a young beauty. He would have given much to see what was underneath the thick silken flowers of the veil, even though he was sure it would be chiefly poultices bound up with white-and-black handkerchiefs. These modes of wrappings were visible sometimes on Edinburgh streets as they are on those of Paris to-day. It would not be a pleasant sight: still it would be better than the mystery in the corner which sat there, like an image of stone, never showing any sign of life but by the occasional nodding of the distorted head. Was it palsy too, poor soul? had she all the ills that flesh is heir to? John was very sympathetic. The sight of that wrapped-up mass of suffering in the corner affected him very much. He would fain have done something to show his pity. He began to calculate how he should manage to help her out when the coach came to its first stopping-place to change horses and to afford the passengers an opportunity for 'a snack.' Probably she would not be able to take a snack or exert her suffering jaws. He thought perhaps he might get her some broth, which would give her no trouble except the trouble of undoing her veil. Broth was always to be had in a Scotch village about dinner-time. It would warm and comfort her, and perhaps even she could take it without undoing anything. He had a horrible desire to see the coverings undone, and yet he had so kind a heart that he would have been glad to think she could take a little broth without any trouble in that way, poor old soul!

However, he did his best to read his book for an hour or two, turning his mind from the lady in the corner. He would be out of temptation those fellows said. Well, yes, he was out of temptation in one way: but if his fellow-traveller had only been a moderately well-looking woman, even though young and responsive, he did not know that he would have been so much in temptation as with this mystery in the opposite corner, though he felt sure it was a repulsive mystery, and probably would have a sickening, and not an enticing effect upon him. But he said to himself he would just like to know what it was. Poor thing! perhaps it was a dreadful embarrassment to her to find a man opposite to her, to be hampered in any effort to relieve herself which she might have made if alone. He could see that she pressed herself more and more into the corner and leaned the weight of her poor head on the cushions. By

degrees it occurred to him that he might make her more comfortable if she would allow him to make a roll of one of his plaids and put it at the place where no doubt her neck came, so that she could support her head more comfortably. He pondered over this a long time, and experimented on himself how he could do it, before, with much timidity and as fine a blush as if he had been aiding a beautiful princess, he at last ventured to speak.

'The cushions,' he said, 'are not very soft in these coaches.'

The melon with the bulging side turned round to him with a swiftness he could not have thought possible, but nothing was said.

'I've been thinking,' said John, 'I've seen it done in—in my own family. You see, you roll up a thing like a small bolster, and then you place it just where your neck comes'—

He exemplified what he meant by rolling up a large comforter knitted in dazzling white wool, quite new and of his Aunt John's choicest manufacture, made expressly for this journey. It was large and soft, and John rolled it close till it became as round and smooth as a bolster according to his homely simile.

'If you will let me,' he said, rising, 'I think I could place this'—

There was an agitated movement inside the draperies, and a voice that made John jump, between a squeak and a scream, came as it seemed out of the top of the mis-shapen head, 'No! no! I cannot be touched. No! no!'

It made John jump; but after all, what was a voice any more than the other appearances, to daunt him when he had so honest an intention of doing well? He came a step nearer. 'I am sure you will find it more'—

'No! keep away. No, keep away!' the voice repeated with shrill decision, not at all softened but made still more bewildering by a sudden tremor at the end. He paused for a moment with his white roll in his hand, and he distinctly saw the veiled figure shake with a strange sort of broken vibration, as if in one access after another of palsy, was it? or, if not, what else? He did not know what else it could be. He stood for a moment wavering, and then he retired and threw down the comforter impatiently upon the seat. 'Well,' he said, with a sigh also of impatience, 'if you won't have it I cannot help it: still I am sure I could have made you more comfortable,' he added, recovering his good-humour. And he resumed his book: but his attention was sadly distracted; for that spasmodic movement went on at intervals; and there even broke forth certain stifled sounds—was it moaning, was it the signal of some approaching calamity? He gazed earnestly over the top of his book, with a most compassionate face, and held himself on the alert to give any aid he could. But after a while his apprehensions were quieted: there seemed no reason to suppose that anything was going to happen, and these mysterious movements died away.

The lady, however, refused the broth which he procured for her when they stopped, at the risk of having no time for his own 'snack.' She rejected it with the same sharp squeaking voice as before, and with something of the

same strangely convulsive movements, darting away from her corner, when he suddenly opened the door at her side, with a swiftness which it was impossible to suppose such a wrapped-up mummy could be capable of, and an evident fright which piqued him a little. 'No; keep away!' she squeaked again. What a cankered, sour, shrill, old woman! What did she suppose he wanted with her? It was not for her *beau* *jeune* certainly. But he had heard that some women always, however old and ugly they may be, imagine a man wants to make love to them. He laughed at this to himself as he went off to get his 'snack,' and as ten minutes with a powerful young appetite can do a great deal, succeeded fully in indemnifying himself. For the moment he was vexed with this second repulse; but no such feeling had long the mastery in John's honest bosom. There were some fine golden oranges on the table, and he put two or three into his pocket, before he went back to the coach. Perhaps she might like one in the dark hours that were coming before they reached Duntrum, when there would be no light to see by, whatever faces she might make, if she put aside the veil. He put two of them gently on the seat beside her when he returned to the coach: but the mummy only gave a grotesque fling farther back into her corner, and took no notice. Yet once again John made an attempt to be of service to her. It was when the guard, as they passed through the small town of Dunscore, as the evening fell, opened the door hurriedly, and flung in a bundle of postbags, two or three attached to each other with a strap, their metal padlocks shining in the glow of his lantern. 'Last stage afore Duntrum,' said the guard. It was his habit to place the mails there at this point of his journey, in order to give them up to the Duntrum authorities without delay.

'That is scarcely very safe' said John ingratiatingly to his silent companion, 'suppose you or I were less honest than we seem.' He laughed, but his laugh died out of itself in that shamefaced way in which a laugh quenches itself when made at our own joke, and falling flat without response. But presently, after a while, he suggested, which was very true, that it was getting cold, and asked if she had enough wraps, or would accept one of his. This seemed to overcome altogether the patience of the veiled lady in the corner. She told him sharply to mind his own business. 'There's nothing wanted from you,' she said. The voice was odd, the shrill one alternating with a softer note as if two people were speaking. It had almost become a point of honour with John to overcome this persistent defiance. He approached with one of his plaids outspread, and laid it gently about her knees. The answer was a vivacious movement kicking it away.

'Will you not take a telling?' cried the shrill voice. 'Away! and snooze yourself in your corner, and let me be quit of you!' The voice was so fierce that John fell back in spite of himself, and, somewhat mortified, took the unfriendly advice. He did withdraw into his corner, wrapping himself round and

round in his many wraps, until he was almost as much muffled up as his companion. And the night was cold, and there was only a very feeble lamp in the coach. He ended by 'snoozling' as the old lady advised, with his head buried in the high collar of his coat, and as the windows were closed against the penetrating chill of the night, and the atmosphere heavy, fell fast asleep.

He woke with a start some time after, with the sensation of a gust of wind blowing upon him from the coach door. Half bewildered as he came to himself, he saw that the door was open, and caught, with astonished eyes, a momentary glimpse of the face of a young woman, a sudden apparition against the blackness of the night; and then the door was closed sharply and with a clang. The coach was at the foot of a steep ascent beginning to ascend slowly. John sat up suddenly, awake but still bewildered, and rubbing his eyes. The opposite corner was vacant. His plaid lay on the floor where the old lady had tossed it, but she herself had disappeared. He jumped up still confused, and unable to believe his eyes, and groped in the corner. But there was no one there: then he put his head out of the window, and shouted loudly into the night.

LODGINGS AND HOLIDAYS.

In the face of short dividends and diminished incomes, the fact of a steady rise in the rent of apartments at frequented country and sea-side resorts, during their respective seasons, is becoming a serious inconvenience, and a source of alarm to those who hitherto have been able to give their families the usual annual outing. The causes leading to this grievance are many, nor does the blame lie entirely at the door of the people who, to make a living, allow strangers to temporarily occupy their rooms at exorbitant prices. We are a gregarious race, and like a flock of sheep, follow blindly where others lead. Every one is anxious to go where others are supposed to be taking their pleasure; nor is this sufficient, for we must all go at the same time, and that time must cover a short six weeks out of a possible fifty-two in the year. Would it be human nature then, if the fortunate possessors of spare rooms did not, when the rush comes, try and make money when favourable opportunity offers? But further, the evil does not end with the departure of the holiday crowd. Prices go up easier than they fall, and elated with success at having secured an exceptional rent for some mere strip of a room, inadequately fitted with the commonest necessities, the deluded owner continues to try to levy blackmail for the rest of the year.

The law of action and reaction is a steady factor both in public and in private life. Changes come, sometimes imperceptibly, sometimes with startling suddenness, but when the time is ripe, come they will. Only one ending is possible to such short-sighted policy, and judging from the general depression at once well-frequented localities, the point of toleration for high

charges is nearly reached. Empty houses, and bankrupt lodging-keepers, have for the last few years been but too common at many favourite watering-places, and those who have had to face these unpleasant experiences will be wise if they profit from them. Another factor is at work, perhaps not so easy for the suffering public to deal with, because the stakes are higher, and the risk proportionally great. Some one—often as not interested owners of a property—'boom' a place, it may be with capabilities of development, but often as not wholly lacking in attractiveness. Money once invested, the speculation has got to run, and holiday folk always athirst for novelties flock in their hundreds to a new place, and so force it into notoriety. Then the accommodation becomes limited, the jerry-builder sets to work to erect shabby terraces and second-rate villas, with views of neither country nor sea; only neighbours' windows, and back-yards are the pleasing boundary of the visitors' vision. Rents go up, and provisions are far beyond London prices; for tradesmen must recoup themselves for the heavy rents they too have to pay, and their higher standard of living has to be taken into consideration.

So the great wheel of life goes round, and as the spending powers of the classes become more limited, those of the masses seem to expand like an elastic band. What may be the eventual result of the endeavour to raise the tone of social life, is a question yet to be solved. Certainly the transition process is a disagreeable jumble. There are ominous signs on the horizon that the probable command of surplus money for mere pleasuring lies in the hands of ubiquitous 'trippers,' who in their thousands are brought by the railway and steamboat companies in all reasonable comfort, and at nominal prices, to be scattered during the summer months broadcast through the length and breadth of the land, sparing neither our choicest scenery, our most fashionable resorts, nor our pet primitive little nooks. It is not that we would selfishly keep to ourselves the enjoyment of Nature's lovely scenery—free gifts for poor and rich alike—or drink in to the exclusion of others the life-giving breezes which blow uncontaminated through the sweet shady woodlands, from over the pulse-beating ocean, or down from the everlasting hills. No! let all share equally God's gifts, and no one thinks of grudging a holiday from daily monotonous toil in crowded towns and close-packed alleys; but one would like to see behaviour, at these times, a little more fitted to a nation which boasts of its civilisation as our own does, and find sea-side and country resorts kept in some sort of order, and less like the bear-garden they become when 'trippers' are let loose amongst us. If the old chronicler Froissart were to come to life again, he would have to alter his record that the proverbial Englishman 'takes his pleasures sadly.' That is a thing of the past, for nowhere on the Continent do we meet with a holiday crowd so rude, so boisterous, and so little dignified, as in England. The throwing about of greasy papers, broken victuals, and empty bottles, strewn 'thick as autumn leaves in Vallombrosa,'

the riotous undisciplined children, and the hustling elders, would not for an instant be tolerated abroad by the authorities, much less by the people themselves.

Every summer that comes round, it becomes more difficult to find a quiet economical place where we may recuperate exhausted nervous energy, and store up renewed thought for the battle of life during the succeeding ten or eleven months. In the cramped space lodgings afford, where home comforts are absent, and our usual occupations in abeyance, the overstrained mother and hard-worked father of a family look for a little peace and repose, at least out of doors, whether it be idling by the shore with the soothing lullaby of the beating waves, or away over the breezy downs, or ensconced in some leafy forest nook, with the swaying branches of oak and beech for music, and the squirrels and birds for company, anywhere indeed where they may enjoy undisturbed the *dolce far niente* of a long summer's day. But this is only vain anticipation, a castle in the air, which reality soon dissipates. The Nemesis of strident bands, always craving for coppers, noisy niggers, cheap trippers, touting owners of char-a-bancs, are constantly in evidence everywhere; and at the outset of a holiday we must, like Dante, read, and bow down to the stern decree, 'Abandon hope all ye who enter here.' How long is patient tolerance of remediable drawbacks to our peaceful holidays to go on without a stand on the part of those who ought to be the stronger party? And why, too, do we fall into such utter thralldom directly our own comfortable homes are exchanged for lodgings, where we submit to dictated hours, bad cooking, dishonest extras, and all the rest of it? When on the subject of reforms another question arises—why we are made to suffer the inconvenience of having small rooms filled up with big double beds, and have to sleep through the hot summer nights on debilitating feather-beds, or on mattresses full of lumps and holes which have not been teased out for years, and the coverings of which, together with bolster and pillows, from want of an annual cleaning, are neither sweet nor wholesome? And this unpardonable laxity of attention to small details that make up the sum of comfort in our daily lives, is not confined to apartments of lower rents, but is too commonly found in those commanding the best prices.

Some change seems desirable in this unsatisfactory holiday scramble, and in the heavy expenditure entailed, which so many now find a burden beyond their legitimate means. One out of many queries for this end suggests itself: Do we not err in elaborating our holidays too much, hesitating to live during the time on a more modest scale, to drop the attitude of superior beings, and to dress more simply?—all changes demanding a certain amount of self-denial, but which will brace us up like a tonic, and induce a double appreciation of home comforts when we return to them. It is only English people who want to carry these about with them, whether they make a move for a long or a short period. The Italian 'Villeggiatura' is an elementary enough affair. An

empty or partially furnished villa, or flat, is secured, a few necessary household gods are transported, sent on before with the baggage by a reduced staff of servants, who put things in order before the family arrives, and the thing is done. No one expects much attendance, and no one grumbles when they have to help themselves and others. What they want is a holiday, and they take it. Elaborate eating and soft places they will have later on, but their temporary enjoyment is secured, and weighs down by a long way the balance of reduced domestic cares and worries, sent for the time into the background. The Austrians and Germans, again, have a sensible plan one longs to see adopted in this country. Beyond the early breakfast no other meals are served in the house, but cheap and excellent restaurants are always at hand, where can be obtained a greater variety of wholesome, well-cooked food, at a less cost of time, money, and temper, than would be possible were the meals all thought out, marketed for, and prepared in a lodging. The constant spreading and removing of meals, the odours ascending from the kitchen, the irritating unpunctuality, and slovenly cooking we all know from our national method, is thus entirely avoided. Daily expenses can be calculated to a fraction, and when the time of flitting arrives, there are no bills pouring in from butcher, baker, and candlestickmaker, with unexpectedly large totals, the crumpled rose-leaves that send us back from our holidays with ruffled tempers and unpleasant suspicions of the general courtesy. Yes! decidedly we carry the burdens of civilisation too much about with us.

Yet another suggestion must often have occurred to the suffering martyrs of a holiday rush, when casting about for some possible alteration of their grievances. Is it necessary for all the family to go away in a body, as the custom now is? In the majority of cases, the older boys and girls are away for the greater part of the year at schools located either in the country, or by the sea. Clearly then the necessity of this universal custom, flying away in a body like a flock of emigrating birds, cannot be on their account. From school to home is their change, and ought to be sufficient; and with home resources for employment, and enjoyment, with insured sanitary surroundings and suitable, well-cooked food—all doubtful items in lodgings—parents would have less anxiety, and be better able to appreciate the companionship of their children, than in the harum-scarum, feverish existence that holds good with the immediate flight now fashionable directly holidays set in. The juniors could go away some other time, say—'atween June and May, half-prank with spring, with summer half-embrowned'—when Nature is so freshly beautiful, the days long and balmy, and the nights but a short twilight that links the setting sun with the rosy dawn. Rents would not then be at a premium, as in autumn, and the money thus saved would leave a margin, a nucleus for little outings later on when the bigger and more companionable children were at home. Nor would the benefit of some such arrangement be all on one side. Having a season spreading

over months instead of weeks, for earning their yearly income, letters of lodgings could afford to be less exorbitant in their demands, and the same argument would hold good for tradespeople. At most holiday-resorts shops have to stock goods which are in active demand only a few weeks in the year, and then the risk is great; for the public are proverbially capricious, and may, or may not, arrive as usual, or through bad weather, or a sudden outbreak of sickness, they may hurry away prematurely.

We are aware many difficulties stand in the way of setting right the grievances of our holiday jaunts. That they exist, none deny, and all long for some alleviation. The needed changes must be gradual, but ought not to be difficult to accomplish, if all those dissatisfied with the small amount of pleasure gained in return for their annual outlay of money, determined, individually and collectively, to put in their little wedge of reform to remove the monster of imposition, noisy vulgarity, and low rowdiness, which becomes more rampant every year at all our popular sea-side and country places of resort.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

By SIR WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XVI.

LADY FRANCES'S rooms were already well filled when we arrived—later, they were crowded. She welcomed me with her customary kindness. 'I shall never cease to reproach you,' she said; 'but I have forgiven you.'

She was dressed in all her splendour—a blaze of diamonds, a vision of silk, if it was silk, of velvet, if it was velvet. Her queenly stature, her noble figure, her large head and ample cheek, set off her splendid dress; she looked as if this was the only dress she ought to wear; she looked, indeed, a *grande dame de par le monde*.

I presented my cousin. For the moment Robert was staggered. I saw upon his face an expression of weakness quite new to him. It was the weakness of the strong man in the presence, for the first time, of the queenly woman.

She received him with gracious courtesy.

After a few words, I left Robert to talk a little with his hostess. While they stood together, there entered a little old man with shaggy white eyebrows, keen eyes, and a white mane, and a big head, a leonine person. Frances shook hands with him, and then turned to Robert.

'Mr Burnikel,' she said, 'let me introduce you to Lord Caerleon. Mr Burnikel is Member for Shadwell, and a cousin of your friend, Sir George.'

Lord Caerleon shook hands with him. 'On our side, Mr Burnikel, I hope.'

'I have entered the House as an Independent member,' said Robert sturdily.

'Oh!' Lord Caerleon replied drily. 'Yes. I have known several young men announce that intention. But they change it—they change

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it. There is a good deal to be got out of the House by an ambitious man, who goes the right way to work—a great deal—distinction and recognition—that is something—place and power—that is something. You are a lawyer, perhaps.'

'No. I am not a member of any learned profession. I am a Master Craftsman—by trade a boat-builder.'

'Oh!' Lord Caerleon refrained from the least expression of surprise. 'But one may imagine that every young man who goes into the House is actuated by some ambition.'

'My ambition is to make a mark in the House—and out of it,' said Robert.

'Then, sir, I wish you every success. And you will speedily discover that in order to make that mark, you must join a Party: that is, our Party—my Party.'

Lord Caerleon left him and walked over to me. He was a former friend of my grandfather, the judge. 'Is that your cousin, George?' he asked. 'That tall, good-looking fellow over there—Member for Shadwell.'

'He is my cousin, certainly, though rather distant.'

'Oh! he said he was a—a—a boat-builder. Did he speak some kind of allegory?'

'A hundred years ago my great-grandfather and his great-grandfather were partners in a boat-building yard. At the same time, your great-grandfather, Lord Caerleon'—

'Was unknown. Certainly. Yet one does not expect to see an actual boat-builder in a place like this, and looking and talking like a gentleman. You and I, Sir George, belong to the third generation at least of those who were born in the purple of gentility. This man says he is a Master Craftsman. Do we receive the man with a plane and a chisel in our drawing-rooms?'

'He is a master of labour: he employs many men. I believe he will prove himself to be a Master Craftsman in the craft of oratory and debate. He is the strongest man, Lord Caerleon, the most courageous man and the most finished man that I know. You can't dazzle him. You can't frighten him. And I am quite certain from his first speech that he will carry away the House, as he carries away his constituents. Look after him, Lord Caerleon. Don't forget to reckon with him as soon as you can.'

Thinking of what the man was when first I knew him: how contemptuous of social conventions, how determined to go into the House as a rough craftsman; to set everybody right on all questions of labour and employers; knowing nothing whatever of the ways and manners by which alone anything real can be accomplished; and seeing the man in this salon, quiet and assured, yet strangely unlike the ordinary young man of the West End, I was elated to think of my success.

'He has the air,' said Frances, reading my thoughts, because I was looking across the room, 'of a man who has lived in the best society, but not our own. Has he lived in New York?'

'No. He has only lived in Wapping, a distinguished suburb near the place where you heard him speak.'

'Wapping has then, I suppose, a curiously distinguished society of its own. Has Wapping a nobility, an opera-house, ladies of the world? Seriously, George, how did this man arrive at a distinguished manner as well as a distinguished look? You know—I told you—when I heard him speak, I made up my mind that he was a born orator.'

'Well, Frances, he has practised a very honest trade; that prevents meanness; and he has read enormously, so that his level of thought is elevated; and he takes himself very seriously, so that he is self-confident; and he is quick to observe: so that, altogether, I think you may understand how he has arrived at his present manner.'

'He is not a young man for a young lady. I introduced him to one just now, and they separated five minutes afterwards with a lively look of mutual repulsion. Perhaps he began by telling her, as he told Lord Caerleon, that he was a boat-builder.'

'Very likely.'

Then I retired into a corner and looked on. I saw that Frances looked after this guest with a care which she seemed to bestow upon no others. She talked to him; she introduced him to people, especially to members of the House, and I saw that he was not dazzled—not in the least dazzled—by title or by fine dress, or fine manners. It was impossible to condescend with such a man; most likely he condescended to the condescender.

'I like it, George,' he said, when we found ourselves together. 'I like the crowd and the fine dresses and all. It is amusing. I don't belong to it in the least. That makes it all the more amusing.'

'And the women? How do you like them?'

'Lady Frances is splendid. I do not see any other woman in the place.'

It was filled with women—some young and beautiful; some old and no longer beautiful; all well dressed, and most of them animated. But he had no eyes except for Lady Frances.

Presently all were gone. I alone remained behind.

'Let us sit down, George, for a few minutes' quiet talk. Come into the little room. You may have a cigarette if you like. Now, about that tall cousin of yours. Do you really think that he has the qualities necessary for success? It is not enough to fire off a speech now and then, you know.'

'Well, he says he has these qualities. Whatever he says is always true. Quite a man of his word, you know.'

Frances became thoughtful. 'You know, George,' after a pause, 'I was bitterly disappointed that you did not go into politics. You would have had every kind of help. I cannot tell you half the dreams I had nourished about your success. Everything is possible for such a man as you. And you basely deserted us, and went off boat-building. Oh, heavens! boat-building!'

'I did, Frances. I am a wretch.'

'Well, the Party wants a few young men—good young men. If I can get that big strong man, your cousin, to throw himself heartily into the Party, he may prove himself worthy

of being looked after. Help me with him, George.'

'What am I to do?'

'Bring him to dinner with me. I will have a little dinner of you two first: then a little dinner alone with him: then a little dinner with one or two of the chiefs thrown in. Then—but you understand how a woman works in such a case. I want him for the Party.'

'What can you offer him?'

'Nothing yet. We must see first what he is worth. An ordinary young man would be contented with dining with me: he would then go home and dream of making love to me: then he would come here, and try to make that dream a reality. But a young man with a great future before him would want more than that.'

'What will tempt him then?'

'Power. He wants Power. He would be another Gladstone—another Bismarck. He desires Power above everything. It is the greatest presumption: the greatest audacity.'

Frances sighed. 'Oh!' she said. 'If they had only made me a man! George, there is but one thing in the world that I desire—and that is—Power. I could get it easily, even though I am a woman, if I had a husband strong and able and ambitious, and worth working for. Where is that man? You ought to have been such a man, George, but you're not. You are only a common carpenter. Oh! The grovelling of it!'

CHAPTER XVII.—PARTNERSHIP.

A few days afterwards, Robert came over to the yard. He came during the men's dinner hour, when a delightful calm settles down upon Wapping, and even the cranes and the donkey-engines are silent; when the wagons rumble no longer, and there is no ringing of bells and no hammering of hammers, and no grinding of machines. And we sat upon two workmen's benches, opposite each other, and talked.

'I saw Lady Frances yesterday,' he began; 'she was good enough to invite me to call, and so I did call—and had a long talk with her.'

'Good.'

'She's a splendid woman! That's the kind of woman to back up a man. I used to think that a man wants no help from any woman. I now see that a clever, sympathetic woman who understands things may be of the greatest use.'

'Undoubtedly.'

'Of course she's all for Party. She says I must join her Party, or else there is no chance.'

'You've heard that before, haven't you? Well, there is no chance outside the grooves. I am certain of it.'

'Anyhow, I won't join a Party. I went in an Independent member, and I'll continue an Independent member. Nothing whatever shall induce me to join the rank and file of Party—to run about and say what I am told to say. Nothing, mind you. Not even to get the assistance of that woman.'

He spoke with the determination of approaching submission. His words had a forced ring in them—their exaggeration showed weakness. He was under temptation.

'Then, Robert, farewell, a long farewell, to dreams of greatness!'

'We talked about my speech—and she spoke highly of it. Well, why not? A very good speech it was. When we came to read it next day—how it stood out from the windbags and froth of the rest—you noticed that, George?'

'I did. A very fine speech. Full of solid stuff.'

Robert never pretended to any modesty as regards his own work. He honestly thought it a great deal better than the work of anybody else, and he said so, without any affectation of inferiority. This candour impressed people. Other men it might injure, but not Robert. Very few men, indeed, do really possess a sincere, unaffected admiration for their own powers. Most of us are spoiled by diffidence.

'Of course,' he added, 'she admired the speech.'

'Very good. Next!'

'Oh! Then we began talking about other things. It seems odd that I should be taking advice about my own affairs from a woman, doesn't it?'

'It would have seemed odd three months ago.'

'But, of course, Lady Frances isn't an ordinary woman. She's got the brains of fifty women, and the experience of a hundred put together. What a woman she is!'

'How did she advise you about your own affairs?'

'She asked me about myself. Of course I told her everything there is to tell. Why should I conceal things? I even told her how you have given your evenings for three months or more, to show me what the West-End world was like. She strongly advises me to go into society. "Become one of the world," she says.'

'Did she tell you how to get in? The gates of what she calls the world do not exactly stand open to everybody.'

'I suppose not. What they call Society is divided into circles, and there are circles within circles. And there are political circles. And in them she could launch me—of course, on the usual conditions.'

'Party, of course.'

'Party. No room anywhere, it seems, for the Independent member.'

'And you are an Independent member. It is unfortunate, isn't it?'

'Says I must join a political club. But there are none for Independent members.'

'No. It is unfortunate.'

'Then we talked about the way in which men get on nowadays. No one, not even you, ever before understood my position so perfectly. Whatever I tell her, she catches it in a minute. One would think she had lived next door. And about the ways of men—they don't climb, George, they wriggle—they wriggle, most of them.'

'So I have heard.'

'Wriggling and advertising. One must be like the man who advertises his soap, always before the world.'

'That is, in fact, the first thing, and the second thing, and everything.'

'She told me about one man who has cer-

tainly got on remarkably well—yet not so well as I mean to do, because he hasn't the same ability. This man, who, like me, had no family influence, got into a political club, wrote a paper now and again for one of the magazines, spoke frequently at public meetings, was seen everywhere at private views, and first nights, and at private houses, went into the House, spoke there on occasion and with weight, published a volume of essays, was accepted as a man who went everywhere, long before Society received him at all, and is now married to a woman whose wealth and connections will advance him rapidly.'

'That may be your fate.'

'But the trickery of it!'

'If you want to achieve a definite object, you cannot always choose the way. Nobody but yourself, remember, knows your own motives. What you call trickery may appear to the world as the natural reward of ability.'

'Well—but—I don't know.' He walked to the edge of the quay, looking up and down the river. 'It is a world so different from anything I ever imagined,' he said. 'You have opened out the world to me. I confess that I hesitate to venture upon this kind of path.'

'You don't think you are the only ambitious man in the world, do you? My dear boy, everybody there is ambitious, except the men who have got up as high as they can. And even then, they all want something; a little more social consideration, a decoration. Everybody for himself, anywhere. Nowhere so much as in the city of the setting sun—in the West. In other words, you have discovered that many of your old dreams must be abandoned.'

'I shall wriggle as little as may be. Now, listen carefully, and don't interrupt. I am going to make a proposal to you of the greatest importance.'

'Go on. I will not interrupt.'

'Well, I see very plainly, to begin with, that the way open to me means a good deal of expenditure. I must have good chambers, some place where I can receive people. I must keep myself well groomed.'

'Both points are important.'

'I must have a club. I must cultivate people; there are already plenty of men in the House who want to know me. I must be able to give a dinner occasionally, as Lady Frances advised; and there are the daily expenses which in the West End run away with so much money; one must go about in cabs—it isn't possible to go without cabs; why, here I used to spend nothing at all, from day to day, except our modest housekeeping money. It means money. I must have money, George.'

'Yes, if you are going to live over there. But you've got your business here.'

'I can't live in two places. There you have it. If I am going to get on, I must live in the West End—and I can't carry on this business from Piccadilly chambers, that's quite certain.'

'I'm afraid it's impossible. Shall you sell this business?'

'No, I can't afford to do that. Mustn't burn the boats, you know. But I've thought of a plan, and I'll lay it before you to turn over in

your mind. First of all, are you perfectly serious and in earnest about the boat-building trade? Mind, I never believed it. Do you, really and truly, intend to go into the trade as a living?'

Put in that way, I was staggered. Because, you see, I perceived at once what he was driving at.

'What I thought,' I replied slowly, 'when I came here was, that I might learn the business from you, and that I might then take my small capital, which is no more than three thousand pounds, and start as a boat-builder in one of the Colonies—British Columbia, for example, wherever I could find an opening. That was my plan, subject to my mastering the mysteries of the craft.'

'You have mastered most of them, and you are a first-class hand already. But you can hardly be trusted yet in the buying and the selling.'

'Since I've kept the books for you I've learned something of that as well.'

'Yes, but you can't run alone yet. However, that part of it might be managed. Now for my plan. You've got a good pile, though you call it so little. It's a good deal more than I shall want. Give up the idea of a Colony. Settle here in the old place—you can go on living in the old house if you like; and become my partner—the managing partner. You shall buy your share. Don't think that I want only to get your money, though that will be of the greatest use to me. You will make your solicitor examine the books—for that matter you have the books already in your hands, and he will tell you what you ought to offer if you entertain the proposal. Come, Burnikel & Burnikel it has always been called. There were once two cousins in it, before they quarrelled over the old man's diamonds. Let there be two cousins in it again. Robert and George—they were once. Robert and George they will be again.'

He got up from the bench. 'You want time to decide,' he said. 'Don't press yourself. Take as much time as you like. I will advise you in any difficulty, but I can no longer think for the business. You will have to do that. Turn it over in your mind, and tell me when you have decided.'

So he got up and left me. Then the men came back from their dinner, and the work went on again.

The most remarkable part of the proposal was that we were actually going to reverse the situation, to change places. I was to give up clubs, chambers, friends, society, and everything that belongs to the class in which I had been brought up. As I had no fortune, that was inevitable. But I was to put my cousin in my place: he would give up his business, hitherto his livelihood, and take my place and belong to the world. And I was to take his place down in this deserted city of warehouses, where, except the clergy of the parish and myself, there would be no single resident, who, by any stretch of imagination, could call himself of the gentle class.

Ninety years ago, two cousins, Robert and George Burnikel, were partners; after all these

years, two other cousins, Robert and George Burnikel, were to become partners again.

Ninety years ago Robert and George parted. Robert stayed at the yard, George went west. Now, this situation was reversed. George was to stay at the yard. Robert was going west.

IN A NORWEGIAN FARMHOUSE.

By JOHN BICKERDYKE.

OUR farmhouse is placed on a slope, facing the south, and trending down to the small, shallow, weedy sheets of water where trout are rising. These lochans, as they are sometimes termed in Scotland, are fed by the overflow stream from the great lake, which is held up by a natural dam of rock, a hundred feet or more high, and crossing the valley for, perhaps, a quarter of a mile. All around are mountains, some clothed almost to their summits with pine-trees, others more rugged and wild. There are half-a-dozen small wooden houses within sight; each owned by a more or less prosperous farmer. Our host is a well-to-do man, and with a family of two big, broad-shouldered sons—each two inches taller than their father—and three strapping wenches of daughters. They lead a patriarchal life in this wilderness, and have no difficulty in keeping the wolf from the door.

It is a peaceful summer's evening as our stolkjaerres are dragged up the rough road which winds round the hilly slope. The painted, wooden farmhouse is built on massive stone foundations; the portion below the woodwork being devoted to a kitchen and brew-house in summer, a store in winter. Opposite the three rough stone steps, which lead up to the entrance, is a smaller, one-storeyed building, thatched with birch bark held down by sods of turf. One room of this is used as an extra sleeping-apartment, while in the other are the spinning-wheels and the loom. A hundred yards down the slope is a new barn, of which Herr Ole is very proud; for it is neatly made of massive planks and timbers, and roofed in with carefully cut slabs of stone, about two feet square, placed diamond fashion: a barn that will last out three generations of men. Some children are playing with a cream-coloured foal, and another foal is just coming out of the room where the spinning-wheels are kept, and down the steps.

The work is over for the day, and the family come out to greet us, though we are unexpected. We find out afterwards that we are the first English who have ever entered the house or, indeed, been seen by any of its inmates. Our guide and driver, Sivert, tells Herr Ole that we have come to fish the big lake behind that great natural dam, and would be glad of a bed and supper. This hospitality is accorded us without a moment's hesitation, and I am shown into a large room, perhaps twenty feet square. The furniture consists of a bare table; a sort of wooden sleeping-box, five feet four inches long, filled with straw; an unvarnished wooden chair, and a low bench fixed to the wall round two sides of the room. On it are the gayly painted boxes of the family; each

member apparently having his or her private chest bearing the name, place of abode, and date of birth of its owner, along with some more or less barbaric design. On a row of pegs placed not far from the ceiling, and extending nearly round the apartment, hang the Sunday clothes of the family, a suit to each peg; the trousers' legs dangling down, and, late on in the dusk, looking as if some unfortunate people had hung themselves in a row.

There is no carpet, no wall-paper, no lath nor plaster. All is good honest wood; above, below, and all around; no varnish, no polish, no stain, no paint—not even on the furniture. No twopenny-halfpenny one-inch weather boarding, or half-inch match-boards as we use in England, but great solid planks and boards which will stand the wear and tear of centuries. On the windows and doors alone is a little paint—a kind of white enamel. In a corner of the room stands a very old kettledrum, and how and why such an instrument of warfare has a place in this peaceful dwelling is for the time beyond my comprehension. There are two big windows, in one of which a pane of glass is wanting, and Sivert tells me that the family are greatly concerned thereat; on my account be it understood, for much ventilation is deemed an evil thing out here. An oval rusty tea-tray is leaning against the wall. It fits the window so far as tops and sides are concerned, leaving ample room for fresh air at the corners, so the matter is soon settled.

There is a pretty rustic scene taking place outside the window, which would require the pen of a Richard Jefferies to properly describe. One of those miniature cows which are found among the mountains—a light fawn colour and well bred—is standing by the side of the palings which fence in a small potato plot; it wears a sort of bridle, with reins, made of fishing-line, by which a maiden is holding it. Seated on an upturned pail is one of the farmer's broad-shouldered sons, who is endeavouring to milk the cow, which kicks at intervals, for the poor creature is ill, her udder tender, and the operation painful. Another girl is standing by the side of the animal, leaning across its neck to keep it quiet, chatting the while. Presently, the aged grandfather, with long flowing hair, and teeth brown and worn down by constant chewing of tobacco, comes wandering up with the feeble and uncertain steps of age. The cow will not yield milk; no, not even to the old man, who takes his place on the upturned pail, moistening his hands; but his oft practised, though dirty fingers are of no avail, and it seems to me that the refractory invalid is led off in more or less disgrace. Secretly, I am glad that the milk we look for presently at tea-time has not come from this particular source.

There is no hand-basin in my room, and no water, so I call Sivert, tell him of my wants, and presently Sameline, the farmer's wife, appears with a basin of water, which she puts down on a chair, and retires. Soap and towels are apparently unneeded in this primitive land, but they are also forthcoming through the medium of Sivert. I note that the slice off a bar of mottled soap, produced for my especial benefit from the depths of one of those big

boxes, is, during our stay in the house, borrowed whenever any member of the family wants to wash his hands. In the midst of my ablutions, one of the sons strolls in unannounced, sits on a box and watches me. I know exactly six words of Norwegian, so I try their effect on him, which is not exactly electrical. As Sivert afterwards explains to me, 'When you talk Norwegian dey do tink you talk English, and so dey no try to understand,' which is very stupid of them.

We have brought with us eggs, bread and fresh butter, and a lump of gruyère cheese, which has been diffusing its somewhat powerful scent among the clothes and other things in my box, during our travels from Bergen. It is an hour and a half before the trout, which I caught on my way up, are cooked. Norwegians have a weakness for cutting all things into slices, if possible, and food not sliceable, into small pieces. All my trout run about three to the pound, and are divided into four or five portions, just as though they were eels. But they are admirably boiled, and in due course placed on a side-table in an adjoining room, where the doctor is to sleep, he also having a five feet four inch box filled with straw. Two knives, some salt in a piece of paper, and two tea-cups are on the table. We ask Sivert to see if the good people cannot provide us with forks, teaspoons, saucers, and a milk jug. For the latter, Sameline brings in an antique china bowl, full of milk, and two curious ancient Norwegian silver spoons, with flat handles and quite round shallow bowls, used to dip the milk out of the basin.

Sivert sits down with us, as a matter of course, and very skilfully skins and takes the bones from the small chunks of trout by means of a knife, a piece of dissection which the doctor notes with professional interest. It would seem that forks are usually dispensed with in this part of the world, but two very doubtful ones (I say doubtful because it is not clear of what metal they are made—perhaps they were once upon a time silver-plated), after a long search, are discovered in a box hidden away under the bed. All these things come in dribblets, and by the time the meal is set out, the trout are cold and our hunger not decreased, for it is now, if you please, eleven P.M., though still very light, and we have had no food since two o'clock.

As soon as the not-altogether-gargantuan feast commences, the farmer and the whole family, except the grandfather, troop solemnly into the room, stand in a semicircle and watch us feeding, just as if we were some strange creatures at the Zoo. In fact, I believe that we are really greater curiosities to them than the lions and tigers are to Master Tommy in Regent's Park.

After supper I have a happy thought. I have read somewhere that the Norwegian children are exceedingly fond of sweets, and, owing to the heavy tax on sugar, have few opportunities of eating them; so I bought a pound in Bergen, and this I hand round. The whole family solemnly help themselves, and, with deep gratitude depicted in their faces, come up to us, shake hands with both the

doctor and myself, and say, 'Tak.*' I give some cigars to the farmer and the two sons, the latter never having before smoked such a thing. The thrift of the Norwegian is shown in the treatment of these cigars by the youths. They smoke for five minutes, then carefully extinguish the burning end and place the cigar away in some corner of the house. The next morning I see them having another five minutes' smoke, and these cigars actually last for over two days, being taken in homeopathic doses at intervals of about two hours. Finally the ends are cut up and used in grandfather's pipe.

When I come to turn in, I find that a gorgeous woollen blanket of many colours—one of the products of the loom in the little house opposite—has been spread over the straw in my box, and there are two others to cover me. But before I am allowed to go to bed, the whole family, without exception, come into my room, examine all my things, first inquiring the English name of them, and then giving me the Norwegian.

'Engelsk?' says Herr Ole interrogatively, pointing to my razor.

'Razor,' say I.

'Ah so, razor. In Norsk, barberkniv,' he informs me. And so on through brush, comb, nail scissors, and all the things which Englishmen deem necessary for making the toilet; finishing up with sundry items of fishing-tackle which I have laid out on the table. My magnificent disregard of money in using silk for a fishing-line astonishes them. With the aid of a dictionary I tell them of what it is composed. 'No! it must be cotton, or hemp.' But I stick to my silk, and finally convince them, and they evidently regard me as a very thriftless sort of person.

It is now as dark as it will be during this short summer night, and Mrs Sameline has brought into my room a curious old repoussé work Swedish candlestick, with twisted stem, in which is a home-made, tapering, tallow candle nearly two feet in length. I am very tired, and though immensely interested in all these things, should be better pleased if the family would take into consideration my doubtless foolish English prejudices and forbear from spitting on the floor; in other respects my visitors are most clean. Each and all of them have removed their wooden shoes before entering the room, and are walking on the bare floor with their stockinged feet. The grandfather, in particular, takes a kindly interest in me, and sits on the edge of my bed chewing tobacco and acting after the manner of chewers. The candle growing dim, he snuffs it with his fingers, and drops the lighted fragment of wick on the floor, extinguishing it with his stockinged foot. Finally, some of them wander out. The last to go is the eldest son, and he, I believe, has a sort of morbid desire to see what an Englishman looks like when undressed. But I do not intend to satisfy his wishes in this respect, and by dint of 'god nat' many times repeated, induce him to go. But he has learned of me the English of this expression, and ten

* *Anglice*, 'Thank.'

minutes later puts his shaggy head in at the door, grins, jerks out 'Good-night,' retreats, and I see him no more.

A good deep bed of straw with a warm woollen rug over it is not an uncomfortable thing, provided there is leg room, which in this case is wanting. But after these long journeyings, fishing by the way, one is thankful for anything in the shape of a bed, and heaven forbid that I should criticise the kindly hospitality of these good people. For a few minutes there is a great thumping about overhead, for the common sleeping-room of both girls and boys appears to be above, and neither men nor Norwegian farm lasses tread very lightly. There is a great joke going on—it is to say 'Good-night,' to each other in English. How they laugh over it! I can hear every word they say in this wooden house. Let me here say that although sleeping arrangements of this kind appear to be quite common in the wilder parts of Norway, there are no more moral people in the world than the Norwegians of the west coast.

The doctor, who was saved from the visitation of the previous night, is up betimes the next morning and wakes me at an early hour. These farm-people seem to care nothing about sleep during the summer months, having, I suppose, an overdose of it in the winter; for they have been up hours ago, shaving away at little patches of grass among the rocks with their small hand-scythes, not much larger than three 'barberknivs,' and nearly as sharp.

While Madame Sameline is preparing some more trout for breakfast, and apparently much puzzled about frying them in butter, a method which we had suggested to her through Sivert, I wander among the farm-buildings, and with, I hope, a pardonable curiosity, poke my nose into a number of places where I have no business. In one little wooden storehouse are sacks of meal, and barrels containing salted herrings of evil odour. A little way down the hillside is a tiny hut, some eight feet square, through the turf roof of which blue smoke is oozing. I look in here and see the farmer's eldest son working at a small forge, fashioning a new set of shoes for the mares which are to take us on our journey in a day or two. The animals, with musical bells fastened to their necks by a leather collar, and with foals running by their side and taking an early but spasmodic breakfast, are feeding on the short sweet grass near this little smithy. Two old, and evidently not often used, *stolkjaerres* have been dragged out from some shed and placed in front of the house containing the loom, to be prepared for the continuation of our journey. The shaft of one has been broken and has evidently been spliced that morning with a piece of fishing-line. Bearing in mind that the roads are bad and the hills steep, that there are no traces, and a great deal of weight is placed on the ponies' shoulders, a nervous person might not feel altogether happy in contemplating the prospect of a journey in these particular conveyances.

I try to take stock of the farmer's possessions. Imprimis, there is a good stout timber-built red-tiled house, and the more old-fashioned

loom-house, which, I daresay, was the dwelling-place of an earlier generation. There are one or two small sheds used as stores, the big barn I have mentioned, and the little smithy. Close to the house is an all-too-small potato patch, and round it grows fine grass full of sweet herbage. Quaintly cut out of the grass in sundry places are a few square yards of land devoted to grain crops. By the edge of the potatoes are about twenty hop plants. Most of the cows and cattle are away on the common grazing grounds up the mountains. It is by no means a small farm, and I am told the tax paid to the State for it is about fifteen pounds a year. There is no hired labour; everything is done by the man and his family, and never have I met with more contented, happy, prosperous people. In the stone basement beneath the room in which we have our meals, the farmer is busy brewing two or three barrels of beer; while over a wood fire on an open hearth, Mrs Sameline is frying our trout.

Earlier in the morning the doctor has told me, with much amusement, that on his giving out some tea for breakfast, Sivert has said that more tea was unnecessary as the leaves which were used overnight would do again. 'Of course I told them to throw away the tea-leaves,' says the doctor, 'and the man seemed quite surprised.'

While in the kitchen, Sivert comes up to me with serious face. 'Do you think I should throw away the tea-leaves which were used yesterday? They are very good.' From this I gather that they look upon the doctor as a wasteful, thriftless sort of person, whose judgment in these matters is of no account; but pay me the compliment of regarding me as prudence personified, and as one not likely to fall in with such wicked waste.

'Don't you think, Sivert, that Mrs Johannesen would like those tea-leaves?' I query.

'Oh! yes, she would,' says Sivert without hesitation, and so we settle the matter and please everybody, particularly Sameline; but it is quite clear the doctor has fallen in their estimation.

Sivert announcing that breakfast will be ready shortly, I return to the house, and see through an open door the eldest daughter busy at her sewing-machine. She is sitting in a tiny cupboard of a room, in the angle of which is a corner cupboard, having wrought-metal hinges and finely carved oak doors. It must be centuries old, and contrasts strangely with the modern machine the girl is using.

The farmer and his family are now so busy that they withstand the strong temptation to see the Englishmen eat with forks. One of the girls offers us *fladbrød* this morning, a contrivance evolved out of meal and water. I believe it can be easily imitated by means of a disc of stout whitey-brown paper about two feet in diameter. The delicate, crisp, short eating *fladbrød* of the hotels is very different from this stuff, which is tough, and requires excellent teeth for its proper mastication. On this, potatoes, porridge, and herrings, these people seem principally to live; with the addition of some trout in the summer. Green vegetables they do not trouble to grow, and for

lack of these purifiers, eating too many fish, and perhaps owing to the lack of ventilation in their houses during the long winter nights, scrofula and leprosy are all too common. Apple cultivation is steadily on the increase; but the people might none the less turn their attention with great advantage to the kitchen garden.

During breakfast rain commences. As soon as our frugal meal is over we sally forth, clad in macintoshes, ascend the slope of that great rocky dam, and spend the day on the beautiful lake, catching most excellent, pink-fleshed trout. In the evening, when we sup, the family again surrounds us.

And this is very much our life in this primitive spot. The curiosity of the people concerning us, and our feeling of strangeness, gradually wear off. As our hosts begin to know us better, and we them, our regard and esteem for each other increases.

Stay, I have almost forgotten to explain the mystery of the kettledrum. I sound Sivert on the subject, and he tells me that the farmer's eldest son, like all young men in Norway, has been drilled for a soldier and has developed strong musical tastes which have led to his being appointed drummer. Word is passed round the family that I have asked about the drum, and on our second evening a deputation waits upon me, headed by Sivert, to inquire if I would like to hear the drum played. I weakly say 'Yes,' and about the time that I am longing to turn in, the whole family again troops into my room, the eldest son arming himself with long sticks, shouldering the drum-sling, and fires off volleys of rolls, beats, tattoos, and other things at my unfortunate head. I say 'Mange tak' many times, but the more I thank him the more he plays, until his arms weary and then, thank Heaven! I am left in peace. The moral is that English travellers in Norway should not be inquisitive in the matter of drums.

LONDON'S GREAT LANDOWNERS.

LITTLE could the owners of the rural manors which encircled the London of mediæval times have foreseen the almost fabulous value which would one day attach to their lands. The vast increase in the numbers of those who are drawn, whether by business or pleasure, to the capital of the Empire, has caused every available spot in close proximity to town to be covered with houses, whereby an artificial value has been given to land the agricultural worth of which is little more than a quarter of a million. To-day, through pressure of population, it is said to be worth three hundred millions, without the buildings upon it. The oldest landowners in Middlesex are the Russells, and it may be convenient to begin with them in giving some account of London's greater landlords. At the dissolution of the religious houses, the garden of the Abbey at Westminster, and the lands belonging to it, was granted by Edward VI. to his uncle the Duke of Somerset, and, upon his attainder, came back to the Crown. Then in May 1552, we find a patent granted to John, Earl of Bedford, of the convent garden lying in

the parish of St Martin's-in-the-Fields, with seven acres, called Long Acre, of the yearly value of six pounds six shillings and eightpence. The right to the market which had come to be held here, was granted by Charles II. to William, Earl of Bedford, by letters-patent in 1671. At the present day the gross revenue derived from it is said to be somewhat over twenty-five thousand pounds a year, a considerable portion of which sum is laid out in market expenses. Besides Covent Garden, the Russell family possesses considerable property in the districts of Bloomsbury and St Giles. At one time this estate belonged to the Earls of Southampton—the manor of St Giles having been sold for six hundred pounds to the trustees of Henry, Earl of Southampton, in the reign of James I. This, together with the manor of Blemund, formerly belonging to a Leper Hospital, descended to the fourth Earl of Southampton, at whose death in 1668 it became the property of his daughter and co-heiress, Lady Rachel Wriothesley, who by her marriage with the celebrated William Lord Russell, brought this estate of about two hundred and forty-five acres into the Bedford family. The old manor-house of the Blemunds stood on the site of the present Bedford Place. Another large property in this neighbourhood, owned by Lord Northampton, is situated in the parishes of St James, Clerkenwell, and St Mary, Islington, much of it consisting of very poor houses in a working-class district. Canonbury Manor came into the Compton family by the marriage of the heiress of Sir John Spencer, a citizen of London, who died in 1609, with William Lord Compton.

The owner of the most fashionable district of London is the Duke of Westminster. This extensive property at the West End was acquired by the marriage in 1676 of Sir Thomas Grosvenor with Miss Mary Davies, the only child of Alexander Davies of Ebury Manor—which, roughly speaking, is represented by the Grosvenor estate of to-day. The boundary of the estate, which is situated in the parishes of St George, Hanover Square, and St John, Westminster, begins at the Marble Arch on the south side of Oxford Street, runs down the centre of Oxford Street, almost to South Molton Street, and passing down Davies Street, takes in a small portion of Berkeley Square (with Thomas's Hotel), and including both sides of Mount Street, runs up the middle of Park Lane to the Marble Arch again. The Belgravia part of the estate begins at St George's Hospital, runs down the centre of Grosvenor Place to the Buckingham Palace Road, and passes down the western side of Vauxhall Bridge Road almost in a straight line to the river Thames, thence running along the river bank eastward as far as the Grosvenor Canal. The property does not comprise Sloane Square, Cadogan Place, or Lowndes Square, but includes all Belgrave Square and Wilton Crescent, the boundary running up again almost to the Knightsbridge Road.

The Millbank estate near the Houses of Parliament also belongs to the Grosvenor family. The collection of pictures now at Grosvenor House began to be formed here at Peterborough House, which was pulled down in 1809, to

make way for Millbank Prison, now demolished in its turn. Many of the leases on the Grosvenor part of the estate have recently fallen in, and a great deal of rebuilding has taken place, the aspect of this neighbourhood being completely changed. Probably no other London estate has been so much improved of recent years. Grosvenor Gardens were rebuilt when the erection of the Grosvenor Hotel and the Victoria Railway Station necessitated broad approaches and handsome houses in this vicinity. Later on, Hereford Gardens, half of Grosvenor Place, part of Grosvenor Crescent, and so forth, have been rebuilt, as well as nearly the whole Oxford Street frontage of the estate. The names of the streets and squares in both districts are connected in some way with the history of the family. Thus Eccleston, Chester, and Belgrave Squares are named after different portions of their Chester estates. Davies Street recalls the heiress of Ebury Manor, which in its turn gives its name to a street in Belgravia. The Dorsetshire mansion of a dowager-duchess gives us Motcombe Street, while Halkin Street is named after a property in Flintshire. The value of the Grosvenor portion of the estate must have recently been greatly augmented by the falling in of so many leases, and by the erection of better built and more spacious residences in Mount Street, Duke Street, Aldford Street, and so on.

An estate adjoining the Belgravia part of the Duke of Westminster's property belongs to Earl Cadogan, and has recently been much developed. The fine red brick houses in Hans Place, Cadogan Square, Pont Street, Lower Sloane Street, and so forth, have attracted many of the rich and fashionable to this district; and an old inhabitant would hardly recognise the semi-rural aspect of Chelsea under its changed conditions. This estate, which bids fair to rival that of the Duke of Westminster in value and importance, was brought into the family by the marriage of General Cadogan, a celebrated officer of Horse Guards in the wars of Marlborough, with the daughter and heiress of Sir Hans Sloane, who had acquired the manor of Chelsea in 1712 from the family of Cheyne.

More details are available as to Lord Portman's London estate, which consists of about two hundred and sixty acres. The estate commences at the junction of Richmond Street and the Edgware Road, and includes Montagu and Manchester Squares, Great Cumberland Place, Baker Street, part of Marylebone Road, and other well-known localities, as well as the poor neighbourhood of Lisson Grove. It is let, generally speaking, upon ninety-nine years building leases, dating from the years 1816 to 1822. In the year 1512, the Lord Prior of the Knights of St John of Jerusalem at Clerkenwell granted a lease for fifty years to John and Johan Blennerhasset of a farm exactly conterminous with the present Portman property. In 1532 Chief-justice Portman bought the reversion of their house from the executors of the Blennerhassets, the land being subsequently acquired in fee-simple in the reign of Mary. The Seymour family at one time possessed the property on the termination of the male line of the Portmans. Event-

ually, however, it reverted to William Berkeley, whose mother had been a niece of the last Portman. These changes give us a clue to the names of various streets in the locality, such as Seymour Street, Berkeley Street, and Portman Square. Bryanston Square recalls the name of a village near Blandford in Dorsetshire, as Orchard Street does that of Orchard Portman in Somersetshire. The two Quebec Streets furnish us with the approximate date of their building, that is to say, during the war in Canada in the middle of the last century. Much of the estate is occupied by the shops of West-End tradesmen, and various improvements have been carried out, though not to so large an extent as on other large London estates. Leases are generally renewed for a period of twenty-five years.

A large contiguous estate belongs to the Portland family. To trace the manner in which it descended to its present owners, we must go back a couple of hundred years to the time when John Holles, Duke of Newcastle, purchased the lands of Tyburn or Marylebone for the sum of seventeen thousand five hundred pounds. The Park at Marylebone, known to-day as the Regent's Park, was specially reserved to the Crown. The daughter of this nobleman, the Lady Henrietta Cavendish Holles, married to Robert Harley, afterwards Earl of Oxford, inherited the lands of Tyburn in 1711. Her only daughter Margaret married William Bentinck, second Duke of Portland, thus bringing the estate into that family. At the present time its northern boundary takes in a large portion of the Marylebone Road, including Madame Tussaud's, where the last part of the property is situated. The boundary then runs down the eastern side of Marylebone Lane as far as Oxford Street. That street, between Wells Street and Marylebone Lane, forms its southern boundary. The lower part of Portland Place and the upper part of Regent Street belong to the Crown. The Portland Marylebone estate does not belong to the present Duke, but to the daughters of the fourth Duke. The history of the devolution of the estate upon its present owners explains the origin of most of the street names in the locality. Thus we have Portland Place, Holles Street, Harley Street, and Oxford Street—the last named in honour of the accession of Robert Harley to that title. The wife of John Holles, Duke of Newcastle, was an heiress of the Cavendishes of Welbeck, which explains the names of another street and square. The Harleys were originally of Wigmore Castle, which name survives in a principal street in this neighbourhood. Another portion of the Portland estates embraces nearly all Portland Town, that is, the district bounded on the south by Regent's Park, from Primrose Hill to St John's Wood Chapel, embracing Avenue Road.

One other family in the central district of London may be mentioned as owners of an estate bordering on the Euston Road and recording their name in Fitzroy Square. The manor of Tottenham or Tottenham was held on lease in the reign of Charles II., by Isabella, Countess of Arlington, who married the Duke of Grafton, son of Barbara Villiers, Duchess of

Cleveland. Later on, one of the Fitzroys was created Earl of Southampton, and acquired this manor in fee-simple. The eldest son of the Duke of Grafton, the Earl of Euston, has his name recorded in Euston Road and Euston Square, though the Southampton branch of the Fitzroy family are the present owners of the estate. A small but important estate in the Strand, including Norfolk Street, Surrey Street, Howard Street, and other thoroughfares between the Strand and the Embankment, belongs to the Duke of Norfolk. The Howard family is one of the oldest landowners in Middlesex, being preceded by the Russells and Cecils only. The value of this estate since the formation of the Thames Embankment must have been greatly increased. The site adjoining the Outer Temple—the former residence of the Earl of Essex—was occupied by the Bishops of Bath, whose rights were usurped by that Seymour who was brother to the Protector Somerset. At his death, Henry Fitzalan, Earl of Arundel, bought it for forty-one pounds six shillings and eightpence, and in 1579 it devolved upon the Howard family. The Savoy estate belongs to Her Majesty, having been settled with other property of the Duchy of Lancaster on the sovereign for the time being by the son of John of Gaunt, the first Duke of Lancaster. Cecil Street, Salisbury Street, and neighbouring property still belong to Lord Salisbury.

A few words in conclusion as to the large landowners in outlying districts of London, such as Lord Amherst. The Tyssens were formerly merchants in Holland, who settled at Hackney near London in the reign of James II., and purchased the manor in the year 1600. The property passed in the latter part of the last century by marriage to the Amhursts of Rochester, and subsequently to the Kentish family of Daniel, who thereupon assumed the surname and arms of Tyssen. The additional name of Amhurst was then taken. The present head of the Tyssen Amhurst family was recently created a peer under the style of Baron Amherst of Hackney. De-Beauvoir Town to the north of Hoxton is part of this estate, and records the marriage of a certain Francis Tyssen of Shacklewell to a daughter of Richard de Beauvoir of Guernsey. Another landowner, possessing states in Bermondsey, Southwark, Camberwell, and Newington, has been recently ennobled as Lord Llangattock, better known as Mr Rolls of the Hendré. The Rolls property includes the thoroughfare (recently celebrated in noble verse!) known as the Old Kent Road.

The property of the Pratt family is situated in the St Pancras district. Charles Pratt, Earl Camden, became possessed of the estate which now is called Camden Town by his marriage with the daughter of Nicholas Jeffreys about the middle of the last century. St Pancras seems to have been one of the many prebendal manors around London, and was held by a Canon of St Paul's. A separate manor appears to have passed into the hands of the Cantlo or Cantilupe family, and under its present corrupted name of Kentish Town is practically owned by the Pratts, though it is said to be subject to a nominal rent to the prebendary. Another hamlet of St Pancras, known as Somers

Town, is named after the family of its present proprietor, Earl Somers.

It will be seen that the corporation of the City of London, the Livery Companies, and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have been omitted from the foregoing account of London's great landowners.

CHANGES IN PRONUNCIATION.

It requires no very profound knowledge of English literature to ascertain that the pronunciation of the language has undergone a vast change during the last three centuries. The shrewd conjecture has, indeed, more than once been hazarded that the works of the Elizabethan dramatists would be unintelligible to a modern audience if the native and original pronunciation were adhered to; and certain, at all events, it is that in many well-known passages of Shakespeare the very rhythm of the line imperatively demands a strange and unaccustomed accentuation of certain words. With the peculiarities of a later period most people are sufficiently acquainted. That *gold* was *goold* and that *china* was *chaney* during the Augustan era is matter of common knowledge; and who can forget Pope's description of Atticus:

Dreading even fools, by flatterers besieged,
And so oblecting that he ne'er oblecteg?

The last-mentioned mode, as well as the two others, lingered on well into the present century, and was habitual with Lord John Russell; though they are all, probably, by this time as rare as *Rooshia* for *Russia*, and rarer than *Spaw* for *Spa*.

What we are not quite so apt to realise is that in our own day similar changes are taking place. No doubt it requires a considerable length of time before a marked alteration of the sort becomes generally or universally adopted in conversation, and even a longer period before it percolates from speech into poetry. Why there should be these perpetual transitions is a question to which it would be as presumptuous to give a hasty answer as to decide off-hand by what strange concatenation of cause and effect the once abhorred 'split infinitive' has thrust itself into every newspaper and magazine. We can only note two strong tendencies which have manifested themselves during the last quarter of a century.

The first of these is the tendency to throw the accent back as far as possible in words of more than one syllable. People used to look at the *contents* of a book if they wished to grasp its *details*; now they dip into the *contents* in order to pick up the *détails* (rhyming almost with 'beetles'). The Inland *Revénué* has been almost wholly displaced by the Inland *Révenue*, and few indeed are left to *contémplate* the pictures in the *illustrated* papers; for all who have any pretensions to modernity either *contemplate* or *illustrate*. A few changes of the kind have hitherto failed to commend themselves to a fastidious taste. Thus, though it may be a mark of doubtful gentility and breeding to discourse freely of *manûre*, you are not likely to mend the matter by calling it *mânure*. The pursuer's statement of claim and the

defender's answer to it in a Scotch lawsuit, still, happily, compose the *record*, and the strangeness of *récord* would attract attention; yet when the final *decree* has in some mysterious manner become *decree*, and the pronunciation of clerks has become that of advocates, there is no knowing what may happen. So *deceased* becomes in the mouth of many *déceased*; and we question if nowadays any schoolboy would come by the hearty flogging he deserves if he alluded to Swift's *inkwery* (with an emphasis on the *ink*) into 'The Conduct of the *Al-lies*.' This unjustifiable distortion of 'inquiry' is perhaps the least lovely fruit of the tendency in question, and is believed to be peculiar to North Britain, though in point of ungainliness it is run hard by *écopy* for *expiry*. The subject has ceased to be interesting (except on the stage), and is merely interesting, but it might be worth following out for all that.

The second tendency to which we have alluded might be regarded by an optimist as a strong testimony to the efficacy of the Education Acts; by a pessimist as a melancholy illustration of the mischiefs produced by false

analogy. Every boy or girl comes by a certain amount of spelling; and *nearly* every boy or girl, heedless of the warnings with which the English language bristles, forthwith proceeds to jump to some tempting but erroneous conclusion, illustrating most aptly the process of arguing from the known to the unknown. Thus a child, discovering the orthography of 'jerk,' straightway begins to talk of *Burkshire* for *Barkshire*, of *Durby* instead of *Darby*, of *Hurtford* instead of *Hartford*. And so the true and racy and vernacular pronunciation is lost by degrees. One longs for the days when, according to Lord Brougham, Mr Fox habitually spoke of the capital as *Lunn'on*, of Birmingham as *Brunmagem*, of a merchant as a *marchant*, of a shire as a *sheer*, just as Mr Windham would speak of doing things 'a' purpose.' How our present unfortunate tendency is to be arrested, it is difficult to see; but perhaps the literature of the 'kailyard,' which has left scarcely a village in these isles without its historian, may at least contribute substantial assistance towards preserving uncontaminated and unspoilt the pronunciation of our local names.

THE TENTH MUSE.

'Sporting literature has been termed the tenth Muse.'

A DISCOVERY of interest has recently been made,
And some little curiosity is here and there displayed;
It has interested circles so remotely placed apart,
As the readers of the *Sportsman* and the lovers of
Greek art.

We had all of us imagined in the days when we
were young,
When as schoolboys we enjoyed the verse which
classic bards had sung,
When we revelled in our Horace, and knew Homer's
ev'ry line,
That the number of the Muses had been limited to nine.

But although we may have thought 'enough' was
better than 'a feast,'
We are told the Muses' family has since then been
increased;
With the new pronunciation and the changing
thoughts of men,
We must greet the new-found sister, and address the
'Nine' as 'Ten.'

It may interest philanthropists to hear it has been urged
Here's a striking new example of a 'tenth' which
was 'submerged';
For she was not known for centuries upon the earthly
stage,
Though in medieval times she must have been past
middle age.

For in good old days there must have been some
sportsmen stout and bold,
And some good old songs were sung, no doubt, and
good old stories told;
When old Rameses, for instance, shot his game in
regal style,
And when Pentaur sang his praises, in the valley of
the Nile.

We can welcome her, new risen, as one greets a new-
learnt truth

Which, though older than the hills, yet blooms in
everlasting youth.

Not a sense of creeping weakness could the Muses'
sister feel

As she cantered through the centuries from Nimrod to
John Peel.

We can fancy her a damsel yet, appropriately clad,
In the classic drapery of Greece, when Greece was
young and glad;

Or can picture her in modern dress, divided skirt and
spats,

In an easy Norfolk jacket and the newest thing in hats.

And she teaches her disciples what is best in earthly
song—

To be tender to a fault, but set their foot upon a
wrong;

And, when writing of their prowess and proficiency in
sports,

To distinguish 'twixt romances and historical reports.

When the cricketer of sixty tells how he was wont to bowl,
And the old crack shot recounts his bags, she teaches
self-control,

And she checks, by gently hinting that the truth
should be exact,

That exuberance of fancy which is not confined to fact.

Antiquarians and sportsmen, and, we might say, all
mankind

Should rejoice to sing the praises of this latest
modern 'find':

Would some scholar kindly help to make her better
known to fame,

And from out his inner consciousness evolve the
Muse's name?

C. J. B.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 645.—VOL. XIII.

SATURDAY, MAY 9, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

A PLEA FOR THE COMMONPLACE.

By HALLIDAY ROGERS.

IF, from the general catalogue of humanity, there could be constructed a 'valued file' in which all mankind should be classified in descriptive groups, there are perhaps few of us who would not be somewhat disappointed if we found ourselves included under the category of the Commonplace. You, dear reader, would not like to be described as a man whose most prominent characteristic is mediocrity. Are you not, indeed, convinced in your heart of hearts that such a description would not be accurate? You do not claim genius for yourself, perhaps, and are content to be left out of the list of the great ones of the earth; but to be commonplace is to be uninteresting, and that certainly neither you nor any one of us has ever found himself to be. In fact, it is just because we have all our lives found our own personality intensely interesting, that we find it difficult to accept the fact that other people fail to recognise this pre-eminent interest, and even find matter demanding more attentive consideration in their own bosoms. Our neighbours are often unappreciative; they allow our wittiest and wisest sayings to fall to the ground unobserved; yet when people are accustomed to regard their own scintillations as the most brilliant imaginable, we cannot wonder if they refuse to blink when we sparkle.

On the whole, then, since the fine aroma of distinction which suffuses our personality is in most of us so exceedingly rare that it fails to tickle any nostril but our own, are we not generally well content to dwell at peace on the quiet level of the commonplace? Do we not feel our hearts wonderfully well satisfied with the fireside joys of life, and something better than ambition gratified by the loyalty of our little realm of home, where all we say and do is irradiated, not with the tinsel sparkle of fashion, but with the purer light of love? Why should we desire a homage which, in effect, only raises a barrier between us and our fellow-men? The

isolation of superiority is but a lonely business after all, and most of us find that an arm-chair beside our neighbours is both more comfortable and more sociable than a pedestal over their heads.

Human affection seems always to twine itself most closely about the commonplace. Striking qualities in those about us excite our admiration, and may awake our love, but any qualities, through long familiarity, cease at length to be striking, and, in course of time, the glittering glacier-peaks of admiration melt into the warmer river of affection. Is it not amid the uneventful quietude of our own homes, among the people who of all the world are most familiar to us, that our love finds its truest repose? I question if the wife of our most brilliant senator loves her husband best when he is swaying the hearts of thousands with the magnificent power of his eloquence, and not rather when she sees him sitting by the fireside in his slippers, with his five-year-old darling on his knee, listening, with a keener interest than he can always command in the House of Commons, to her reading of the time-honoured remarks regarding 'Tom's cat that sat on the mat.'

Most of us have, at some time or other, been acquainted with families in which there was one member, generally on the female side, whose voice was seldom heard, and whose health was rarely inquired after; one whose existence was almost unnoticed except when her absence aroused an impatient sense of inconvenience in those on whom her work devolved, and whose functions in the family life seemed negative till they were intermitted, when they became painfully positive for other people; one, in short, whose mission in life seemed to be to wash the cups from which others had quaffed their *elixir vite*. Very often she is an elder sister—a gentle soul, little given to expression, but only to a repression whose power would be terrific were it not self-directed and invisible. She helps her mother with the children's

mending, helps the children with their lessons, and, as these same children grow up into youth and maidenhood, and push her, without any malevolent intention, prematurely into the mysterious shadow of 'the shelf,' she looks after her sisters' marriages and sees her brothers through their college scrapes and experimental love-affairs, settling down finally into an old maiden auntie of universal benevolence and an unlimited supply of sweets. She is, to quote George Eliot, 'one of those benignant lovely souls who, without astonishing the public and posterity, make a happy difference in the lives close around them, and in this way lift the average of earthly joy.' And this maiden auntie, in the eyes of all around her, is a very commonplace person. She has no special talents or accomplishments, but has all the ordinary ones in an ordinary degree. She is not much accustomed to any one's admiration, least of all her own; nevertheless she is a very comfortable person to have in the house, and, commonplace as she is, the day comes when we find out that she has had more of our love than any of her brilliant relatives.

Shakespeare himself has taught us to love the commonplace. When Macbeth and Banquo have fairly rid their good old king alike of 'malice domestic' and of 'foreign levy,' and have come to receive their well-merited thanks and praise from their liege lord, how does he greet them? Macbeth, 'Bellona's bridegroom,' 'Valour's minion,' advances with stately dignity and is received with nervous gratitude, respectful appreciation, and just a suspicion of timid reserve. Behind him follows Banquo, a type of that cautious courage and honest prudence which characterise the ordinary Scotsman of to-day, with no ceremonial airs or princely dignity, but beaming with honest delight in his victory, his leal heart throbbing with gladness at the good service he has done his king. And while Macbeth stands by receiving congratulations with dignified courtesy and holding his head high with an incipient regal pride, Banquo is swallowing down a lump in his throat as he feels himself enfolded in old Duncan's loving arms. There is no taint of crime as yet upon Macbeth; he is a striking figure in the eyes of his countrymen, famous for his valour, lauded and admired. Banquo is only a brave soldier with little but the accident of rank to distinguish him from many a score as brave and true as he. Yet which of us having, with little emotion, made his best bow to a distinguished personage, would not, like Duncan, turn with more heartfelt warmth to receive the hand-grasp of a brother man?

There is a novelist of the present day who, perhaps above any other, has succeeded in writing books whose every sentence is pregnant with a far-reaching meaning. His characters are ready with valuable epigrams before they have got down-stairs in the morning and sparkle with repartee through sultry afternoons. The cabman at the gate accompanies his salute with an original apothegm charged with immortal wisdom. Lovers attain to the crucial point of a proposal through a labyrinthine discussion on international politics and an interchange of theories regarding the philosophy of govern-

ment. The theories are interesting, the conversations brilliant; some critics place the author in the forefront of the novelists of our century. Certainly in cleverness it would not be easy to find his rival, and few will deny him the meed of admiration which that thoroughly occidental and modern quality deserves. But even cleverness palls sometimes, and we are glad to lay down the book to discuss the weather with our friend Simpleman, or listen to Mrs Commonbody's remarks on the quality of the milk supplied by the new Dairymen's Co-operative Society. Intellectual, and altogether superior as you are, dear reader, I cannot suppose that you are indifferent to the repose of a pipe of tobacco (or, madam, a cup of tea) and foolishness. A multitudinously convoluted fire-cracker, exploding in epigram every thirty seconds, may be an object worthy of our attentive consideration; but if the period of study be prolonged beyond due limits, there is a risk of wearying the ear and permeating the atmosphere with a thirst-breeding odour of explosives. And then, what more welcome to the thirsty lips than a draught of clear, cold water? What more refreshing to the wearied intellect than a whiff of the pure, all-pervading ozone of the commonplace? Who, however highly he has appreciated the conversational gymnastics of our author's *dramatis personæ*, will not find it wonderfully restful to turn his back upon them for a while and stroll with good Gilbert White into his garden at Selborne and follow with interest, though possibly not with excitement, his calculations of the varying inches in the daily peregrinations of his tortoise? We find a sweeter nature awakened in ourselves in considering the domestic gossip of the hedge-sparrow than in tracing the complicated rascalities of even the most magnificent of adventurers, and we listen with a more loving interest to the amorous chirpings of Cock Robin and Jenny Wren than to any description of the intricate matrimonial entanglements of even the most highly cultured of county gentlemen. The fire-cracker may be the result of centuries of science and civilisation, while the cold water was as good in Eden as it is to-day; yet the cooling draught is always refreshing to the thirsty soul, while the fire-cracker does not always afford the exact species of exhilaration demanded by the jaded spirit. Not that fire-crackers are to be despised! Which of us, being present at a pyrotechnic display, would not willingly help to swell the admiring chorus of Oh! and Ah! Only, exaltation is apt to react in exhaustion, and most of us find our repose in the commonplace. Life cannot be all fire-cracker.

'Man, do you know, I like your books,' was the compliment a writer received lately from a friend. 'They're so thoroughly like the thing'—that is, like the *ordinary* thing. The same writer in discussing a prominent preacher chanced to remark: 'Yes, one cannot help enjoying him, he knows so well how to meet the needs of everyday life.' Again the importance of the commonplace! And the preacher, chatting with his wife about the dinner where he had met a cabinet minister, might, quite naturally, say: 'After all, my dear, a cabinet

minister is quite a tame animal—conducts himself just like an ordinary mortal; and of course we like him all the better for that.*

Such are the common opinions of civilised society—the *common* opinions, which, whether we like it or not, are generally accepted as true. Any satisfaction we may have in the occasional appearance of the Eccentric as a variety presupposes the existence of the Ordinary as a basis rendering such phenomena possible—as the neutral background which lends brilliancy to the gayer figures—or as the conception of Silence, without which we could have no definition of Sound. In all cases Eccentricity must preserve some hold on the Ordinary, or cut its possessor adrift from sympathy with the wider life of mankind—a result which would make even the eccentricity of genius intolerable. For what is the life of any man worth if it is not in sympathetic touch with the lives of his fellow-men, and what will preserve this sympathetic touch but familiarity with the joys and sorrows, the loves and hates, the everyday emotions of humanity, which, though capable of infinite diversity in individual history, are yet the common heritage of the race, and produce, in the larger view, a universal identity of experience in all nations and ages? For, after all, surely it is true that only in so far as our hearts beat, stroke for stroke, in unison with the great, common heart of humanity, can there be any true greatness in us at all.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

CHAPTER XVIII.

THEN came the second opportunity. It was three weeks after the first. The occasion was the first reading—or was it the second?—or a Bill for the prohibition of more than five—or was it fifty?—hours' labour in the day, or something to that effect.

However, we knew it was coming, and Robert got me a seat in the Speaker's Gallery, where I sat during the questions with as much patience as I could command. The Gallery was not crowded; the strangers were people up from the country, with a few Americans. They had opera-glasses, and whispered the names of the members whose faces they knew. The House of Commons is one of the sights of London, which is the reason why so few Londoners ever go to it. As for the House of Lords, I wonder how many Londoners have ever seen that august body in deliberation.

The Bill was introduced with a somewhat short and self-excusing speech. I wish I could remember what the Bill really proposed. Not that it matters, however. As the subject was not attractive, the House rapidly thinned. There, again; we are the most political people in the world, but the moment a subject is introduced which deals with the realities of life, the

welfare of the millions, the case of the unemployed, the rule of India, the agricultural depression, the safety of the empire, the condition of the navy, the weakness of the army, the departure of trade, the silver question, the House is swiftly and suddenly thinned or emptied. I suppose the reason is, that the human brain can only stand a certain amount of dull speech, and that these subjects generally fall into the hands of dull and uninteresting speakers. I really do not know what this speaker said. Presently he sat down. Then Robert arose. I think I was more anxious about his success than he was himself. He was perfectly calm and self-possessed; in his hand he held a small bundle of papers; he stood before them all, a striking presence; and he began speaking slowly, with measured phrase, and with his rich, musical voice, which at once commanded attention. Of all the gifts of oratory, the most useful is a rich and flexible voice. Then his first speech, of three weeks ago, now almost forgotten, was again remembered; and the House became quickly filled again.

He spoke on a labour question, from his own point of view, as one who was at once a craftsman and an employer. 'I am, myself,' he said, with the pride of a duke, and the appearance of a gentleman of ancient lineage—'I am, myself, a Master Craftsman.'

Then he proceeded, from his own experience, and from quotations from Blue-books, to marshal his facts, and to set forth his arguments. I did not listen: it was enough for me to let that rolling music of his voice play about my ears: and to watch its effects upon the faces below. Could he grip those faces? He could. Could he move those faces? He could. The average Parliamentary face is singularly cold. One might as well expect that one wave out of all the others could move a hard rock. Yet Robert moved that rocky face. Could he make those faces smile? He could.

I think, not being a critic, that my cousin, like Mr Gladstone, possessed the wonderful gift of being able to invest the baldest facts and the most intricate figures with interest and charm. Like a novelist, he made them personal. He connected figures with men, and brought facts into touch with humanity. And this he did, as it seemed, spontaneously, without effort or any appearance of lecturing. In the House of Commons a man must not be a lecturer, but an orator. The lecturer is necessarily a critic or a teacher. As lecturer, without imagination, he explains carefully how the orator, the poet, the novelist, the dramatist, produces his effects. He knows exactly, and can tell all the world how it is done—the trick of it. Yet he cannot produce the thing himself. Therefore he is of no use in the House. The orator, poet, dramatist, novelist, on the other hand, produces these effects continually. Yet he cannot tell you how he does it.

Robert, then, had this gift of making things attractive. He spoke for an hour or more. The members remained in respectful silence until he worked them up into producing their signs of approbation, of which the House is never chary when it is moved.

Lady Frances gave a dinner party—a political

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dinner—at which some of the heads of the Party were present. And she invited Robert. Among her guests was old Lord Caerleon, to whom he had already been introduced. It was a large party, and Robert's place was down below, among the younger men, who were civil to him. But, of course, in the conversation, it was impossible for him not to feel that he was an outsider.

After dinner, however, Lord Caerleon again talked with him apart. He talked as one who knows the game, and as one who has played it, and now looked on rather tired of it.

'I have read your speeches, Mr Burnikel,' he said, much as a schoolmaster may speak of a boy's set of verses. 'As reported they were fair. I am told that they produced—ah!—some effect upon the House. It is said you have a good delivery, and a good voice. Is that so?'

'It is so,' said Robert calmly. 'I have a good voice by nature, and a good delivery by art.'

'Yes.' Lord Caerleon looked just a little astonished at a young man who thus immodestly claimed these gifts. 'A good voice is a great thing. You have begun well, Mr Burnikel. But a good beginning, in the House, counts for nothing. The House is filled, to me, with the ghosts of men who, in my recollection, made a good beginning.'

'I have made a good beginning, Lord Caerleon; and, with your permission, I intend not to become a ghost at all.'

'Very good. Very good, indeed. But, Mr Burnikel, how are you going to get on? Permit me—I understand for some mysterious reasons of your own, you still wish to be considered an Independent member. You told me so, if I remember rightly, in this house two or three weeks ago.'

'That is so. I am returned by my constituents as an Independent member.'

'I don't think it matters much what they think. But I suppose you talked the usual stuff—voting to order, no conscience, changing opinions, and the rest of it.'

'All the rest of it,' said Robert quietly.

'Of course you did. Now then, Mr Burnikel, let us go into the question of Party for a few minutes—not the whole question of Party, on which you have read—or ought to have read—your Constitutional History—but that part of the question that affects you personally.'

'You do me great honour.'

'I talk to you, sir, because I think that you may possibly—I don't know—turn out an acquisition to either party. Otherwise, of course, one cannot at my age, and with my experience, pretend to take the least interest in the average member. I take the personal side, then. You propose, I believe, to make a career in politics.'

'I do.'

'Lady Frances tells me—you told me so yourself, if I remember rightly—that you are extremely ambitious. I am pleased to hear it. Well, you cannot be too ambitious. Get me a chair: I think I will sit down. So—thank you. Ambition,' he went on, 'the desire for personal distinction, is one of the finest gifts that a boy can receive. I always had it. You

would, I daresay, if we were to compare symptoms, and if you were dissected, present the same phenomena. And my highest ambitions have been gratified, but not satiated. Believe me, sir, the ambitious man enjoys the winning of every step—one after the other; he is never satiated; he can never say "enough."'

'Well, sir,' said Robert, 'you have never had occasion to regret having embarked upon this splendid career. You have been First Lord of the Treasury. Well, my lord, what you desired and attained, that I have the audacity also to desire. Perhaps I shall attain it.'

'Not if you continue in your present course. The one condition which was imposed upon me is also imposed upon you. You must rise in the customary manner by becoming a faithful servant of your Party.'

'That we will see,' said Robert, obstinate and incredulous.

'How then do you propose to climb? My dear sir, before you rises an inaccessible precipice. There are only two ladders. Would you fly?'

'I wish to climb by doing good work.'

'My case, too—exactly my case. I kept on saying that while I was at Oxford. It is really a very fine thing to think, though it is a very foolish and, indeed, a boyish thing to say. Mr Burnikel, there is only one possible way of climbing; and that is by one of the only two ladders. No other way exists—believe me, young man. If there were any other way it would have been found out long ago.'

'There was the case of John Bright.'

'He had to join the Party, remember. John Bright was in every way exceptional; he wanted neither money, nor place, nor power, nor rank. You, I should imagine, want everything.'

Robert was silent.

'So that's settled. If you want to climb, enter by the usual gate, and you will find the ladder waiting for you. Let us pass on to consider the noble work by which you desire to make a mark in history. Noble work, for a politician, means great and beneficent measures. You, as an Independent member, would never be able to pass any considerable measure: not any single measure of the least importance. Why? because all great measures are adopted, as soon as it is found possible to pass them, by the Government. As for moving public opinion so as to make these measures possible, that is done by essayists, leader writers, authors, poets, dramatists, and other intelligent persons, who nowadays prevent a Minister from being original in his ideas. You, as an Independent member, would have no chance at all—not the least ghost of a chance—even of introducing a Bill.'

'I always thought'—

'Think so no longer. Look about you, and face the facts. They are these. An Independent member, whatever he could formerly accomplish, which wasn't much, will never more be able to introduce or to pass any measure, good or bad; he can never become a leader in the House; he can never have the least chance of proving himself a statesman: all he can hope to do is to get the House to listen to him, and through the House, the outside world;

and believe me, sir, on the most favourable condition possible, you will never, as an Independent member, acquire half, or a quarter of the influence over your country that is enjoyed by an anonymous leader writer on a great daily paper.'

Robert made no reply.

'Will such a position content you, sir? Does such a position gratify your ambitions? Why, you have just told me what they are. Pray, sir,' Lord Caerleon looked up sharply with his keen eyes under his shaggy eyebrows, 'will this content you?'

'No; it will not.'

'Let us go on, then. You have told me that you have been pleased, in the education of your Shadwell constituents, to speak of party allegiance as a slavery, a stifling of conscience, a suppression of manhood, and so on. You did talk like this?'

'Certainly. It is the only way of talking.'

'So you think. Now let us look at it in this way. There is a party which in the main clings to the old things, and only admits change when new and irresistible forces command change. There is another party which is always desiring change, because they think that things might look prettier, or because things would be more logical, or because things might help the people, or themselves, by being changed. In the main, every measure belongs to one or other of these parties. Is not that so?'

'Perhaps.'

'Every measure which is brought forward by one or other of the two sides, has been talked about, advocated, discussed in newspapers, in magazines—everywhere—long before. It is brought forward at last when one party has made up its mind to support it, and the other to oppose it. The House is divided into two camps, in which are the two armies. The Bill is proposed and meets its fate. All is done in order, according to the rules of the game. You understand?'

'Of course.'

'What would you have? A House filled with a mob of six hundred undisciplined separate individuals—all clamouring together—all fighting to bring forward some fad and fancy of their own. What a House would that be? What kind of legislation would you expect of such a House?'

Robert, at the moment, could suggest no kind of legislation.

'Suppose you think over the matter from this point of view, Mr Burnikel. Construct, that is, in your imagination, the House filled with Independent members and see how it will work. Oblige me by doing this.'

Robert bowed gravely.

'I daresay that you have already recognised this view of the question. But there are times when the mind seems more especially open to the apprehension of plain truths. This is perhaps one of those occasions. The very name of Lady Frances fills one with the idea of Party.'

'I will, at least, consider your view.'

'Well—and now, Mr Burnikel, I want to speak quite plainly, and, I take it, you are not a man to be offended with plain speech. Very

good. You are not a rich man, I believe; nor a man of family.'

'I have already told you that I am a boat-builder—a Master Craftsman, and my income is small.'

'I have heard as much. Well: your birth and position should be no bar to your ambitions. You have heard that I began with much the same disadvantage. You will very soon find your way about: you are in excellent hands so long as Lady Frances takes an interest in you: and I hope that you will discover, as I did, that this is the very best country in the world for a young man of ability, and courage, and ambition.' He rose from the chair. 'So, I have said nearly all I wished to say.'

'Thank you,' said Robert humbly. He was touched by the comparison of the man who had succeeded with himself and his own case.

'Not quite all. Some of the people think that you may possibly be a coming man. I'm sure I don't know.' Lord Caerleon, who had worked himself up into some eagerness, became all at once limp and tired. 'There are too many wrecks. I have had too many disappointments. But—I say—I don't know. Anything may happen. I don't think I could have made such a clever speech as yours of the other day. I don't know. Anyhow, we are watching you. And—I don't know—it depends entirely on your own ability and common-sense. I believe you may find friends and backers—when you give up nonsense, and are content to play the game according to the rules. Good-evening, Mr Burnikel.'

He inclined his head with dignity; the interview was at an end.

'I was very glad,' said Lady Frances, after this conversation, 'to see Lord Caerleon talking so long and so earnestly with you. It is a sign that he takes a personal interest in you. Believe me, Mr Burnikel, it is a great honour to have been able to interest that old Parliamentary hand.'

'I am indeed very much obliged to him for the trouble he took to convert me to his views.'

'I will tell you a secret, as people always say when they tell a thing that everybody knows. Lord Caerleon came here this evening on purpose to meet you, and have the talk with you.'

'Did he, really?' Robert, who was not to be dazzled, blushed like a girl.

'Let us talk again about this subject, Mr Burnikel. I cannot talk freely to-night. Come to-morrow afternoon—it is not my day—and we will consider the thing calmly, and from your own personal point of view. Oh! I understand it perfectly—but ambition—Mr Burnikel—ambition must use the appointed ways. We belong to our own generation: we are subject to the conditions of our time: and—*enfin*—you must not waste what might be—and shall be—a great career, for the sake of a visionary scruple.'

Robert departed in a thoughtful mood. The observations made by the noble Lord went straight home. If, by remaining an Independent member, he obtained neither power nor place, nor even the introduction of the great, remarkable, never-before-imagined measures of which,

in ignorance of his possibilities, he had vaguely dreamed, he might as well keep out of Parliament altogether, and go on haranguing the working-men of Shadwell.

The day after this dinner, Frances wrote me a letter.

'I had on the table a copy of the *Morning Herald*. It contained a leader against him and his last speech. Quite a leader of the old stamp; I had thought the trick of writing such leading articles was gone. Every sentence perverted; every phrase misinterpreted, and made to mean something different. A masterpiece of party malignity, a leading article, in fact, that cannot fail to do our friend all the good in the world.

'I handed him the paper. He had not yet seen it. Well, you would hardly believe that a real politician could be so young and so foolish. He actually flew into a rage over it; he lost, for a moment, command of himself.

"My dear friend," I said, "the thing is so exaggerated that I thought you had written it yourself."

"Written it myself? Myself?"

"Written it yourself. Don't you understand, Mr Burnikel, that what the young politician wants, is plenty of abuse from the other side. There is a story of a certain aged statesman who very kindly advanced a young man of the opposite bench, in whom he took a fatherly interest, by personally abusing him for a whole twelve months. In three years that young man was Chancellor of the Exchequer. Now, if we could only find some good man on the other side to abuse you—it is difficult, but it might be done."

"Rise through abuse?"

"Certainly, I will tell you why. First, because it keeps people talking of you, thinking of you, and giving you increased importance in the Party; and next, because the abuse is always grossly exaggerated, and people compare it with your printed utterances. If you were rich enough, you might pay a journalist so much a year to abuse you twice a week!"

'He threw down the paper. "Mean artifice!" he cried. "Does this also belong to Party?"

(Eleven o'clock).

'I have just opened a note from him. He has joined us. Yes. The Independent member has vanished.

"Dear Lady Frances," he says, "I have thought over what you said this afternoon; you have convinced and converted me. I am now quite sure that the only way of working the machinery of Government is by means of Party. You have shown me that I have been quite wrong. I shall join your Party as one of its private soldiers, and I shall set myself to learn the obedience and discipline of which you spoke." There, George, I have converted him. Now it was not by my arguments at all, but by those of Lord Caerleon that he was converted. There were all the signs of conviction on his face last night after that conversation. I thought, indeed, of inviting him to sit down on the stool of repentance before the world. But do you think he is capable of confessing himself converted by a man? Never. By a woman, perhaps, although he is too much

absorbed in his own ambition to think much about women. Never by a man. I am contented, however, with my share of the work. You made your cousin a gentleman, my dear George. You gave him manners. At first, I plainly see, he was probably little better than a self-satisfied prig of the boorish sort; a lower middle-class, prejudiced, book-learned, ignorant prig; yet with wonderful capacities. I shall make him a model statesman of the modern kind. What else can we, between us, do for him?"

'Well, my dear Frances,' I said to myself, folding up the letter, 'the next thing you might do for him—if you would, just to oblige me—is to make him a model husband, and so get him out of my way.'

SOME FACTS ABOUT THE OPIUM HABIT.

WHETHER or not the recent Royal Commission on opium has satisfied any one, it has at least supplied the public with information which is interesting, even if it is disproportionate to the time and labour involved in collecting it. The Commission opened its inquiry on 8th September 1893, and its Report is dated 16th April 1895. It visited Calcutta, Patna, Benares, Lucknow, Ambala, Lahore, Delhi, Agra, Jeypore, Ajmer, Indore, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, Bombay, and Burma. It examined seven hundred and twenty-three witnesses—four hundred and sixty-six Indians and Chinese, and two hundred and fifty-seven Europeans—of all sorts and conditions, from missionaries down to Lieutenant-governors. And, finally, it produced seven solid volumes of report and connected papers. It is not proposed in the present article to reopen the discussion of the many vexed questions which the Commission may fairly be held to have closed; but simply to glean a few grains of information which may make some aspects of the question plainer, or, at least, throw a little light on the habits of life of those vast masses of our fellow-men, with whom we westerners have scarcely anything in common, save the most general attributes of humanity.

In the first place, what is opium? It is a very common *materia medica*. Its name is in common use, nearly always with a sinister meaning. For we think of De Quincey, driven to the habit of opium-taking by toothache, and continuing it, till he drank in one day a number of wine-glasses of laudanum, which we will not mention for fear of falling under the condemnation of the Psalmist. Or we think of Coleridge's splendid genius sapped and spoiled by it. Or we think of the even more melancholy *morphinomanie* of the dainty Parisian ladies who figure in the pages of M. Hervieu. And then we are, and naturally, filled with righteous indignation, and talk about Our National Crime. But let us first of all see

what opium is. Every one knows that it is an extract prepared from the juice of the poppy head, and most people know that its characteristic element is morphine. Opium is, as a matter of fact, a substance containing some eighteen active principles, sixteen of which—though they have very high-sounding names—are of no consequence. We need only consider the two chief constituents, morphine and anarcotine. The latter is an alkaloid of the nature of quinine, and with the same tonic qualities: it is commonly called *narcotine*, but as it contains no narcotic properties, the name is misleading, and should be abandoned. The percentage of morphine and anarcotine in the three chief kinds of opium in use in the world is shown in the following table:

	Morphia.	Anarcotine.
Patna Opium.....	3.98	6.36
Malwa "	4.61	5.14
Smyrna "	8.27	1.94

This consideration reveals two interesting facts. The opium which is in medical use in Europe is Smyrna opium; that from which almost all the drinking and smoking extracts in use in India are prepared, is Patna opium. In other words, De Quincey's opium contains at least *twice as much morphia* as ordinary Indian opium. And further experiments made by the Government Analyst at Hongkong—and published in the *Gazette of India*—tend to show that in China at all events—where, however, opium is habitually smoked, not drunk—the morphine is not the element for the sake of which the drug is taken. For it was found that Indian opium—which has the lowest percentage of morphine—is the most highly prized, and a smoker of nine years' standing, to whom various samples were submitted, without any remark, for his opinion, pronounced against those which contained twenty to twenty-five per cent. of morphine, in favour of those containing the lowest percentage. The conclusion is, that we must not judge entirely by De Quincey.

The other fact is even more interesting. In 1857 it occurred to Dr Palmer at Ghazipur to treat malarial fever with anarcotine instead of with quinine. He was markedly successful, and the drug is now in common use as an antiperiodic. But, as we have seen, the characteristic of Indian opium is the preponderance in it of precisely this element. Can we then infer that opium is a prophylactic against malarial fever? To a certain extent we can, for statistics show that those who take daily forty-five grains and upwards of opium, take enough anarcotine thereby to protect them absolutely against malarial poison, while any one taking over sixteen grains will be more or less fortified. It may be mentioned, also, that the morphine element contributes its share as a prophylactic. In the light of these facts, it is interesting to note that in many districts opium-consumption bears a close relation to the greater or less prevalence of malaria. In Assam, for example, in the damp and low-lying country on both

banks of the Brahmaputra, the average annual consumption, per head, is three hundred and fifty-seven grains, the average for the whole province being one hundred and forty-one: and in the Bhagalpur district of the Patna division, the most malarious part has forty-two per cent. of the opium shops of the district for only twenty-seven per cent. of the population. One of the medical witnesses gave the following lively description of the conditions of life in Eastern Bengal. 'When a man wants to build a house, he first of all digs a tank, and with the earth from which he has dug the tank he raises a mound, and on the top of that mound he places his house. The elevation of that mound depends entirely upon the height to which the annual floods rise. The floods rise with fair regularity; but sometimes they go two or three inches higher than the average, and then the inhabitants of those houses have to live on rafts inside their houses, and their cattle are tethered up to their bellies in water. These people have generally no boats. They paddle about on rafts made of the plantain-tree, and the boys go to school in what I call wash-hand basins. They are earthen *gunlas*—earthenware pots. The boy squats at the bottom of the gunla, and paddles to school.' These poor people are often five miles from their nearest neighbour, and some two millions of them are dependent for qualified medical aid on a single European doctor with one assistant. What wonder that opium is their household remedy, and that, when a man, disabled by malarial fever, finds that a dose of a quarter or half a grain of pure opium makes him a new man, and enables him to do the day's work without which his family would starve, he takes it.

One of the commonest uses of opium in India, and one which most strongly offends western sentiment, is its administration to infants and very young children. The evidence, given to the Commission, went to show that between sixty and ninety per cent. of the infants are dosed with it. 'The practice,' says Sir W. Roberts, 'is begun in the first few weeks or months of life, sometimes even from birth, and is continued up to the end of the second or third year. The dose is usually one-sixteenth to one-twelfth of a grain to begin with, and this is gradually increased to a quarter or half a grain, and even to one or two grains, according to the age and necessities of the child.' Sometimes it is given in the form of a pill, sometimes a sucking mother smears it on her nipple. It is given partly as a remedy for the ailments of infancy, partly to keep the child quiet. One witness gives this quite Theocritean picture of peasant life: 'A peasant woman who has to work in the fields gives her child some opium, and puts him in a basket in the corner of the hut, or, perhaps, she takes her child with her to the field, and puts him in a small basket and gives him a little opium to keep him quiet.' Fatalities and cases of poisoning rarely occur, and it should be carefully borne in mind that this practice is discontinued usually at the third year, and certainly at the fifth, and has no connection with the habit which may or

may not be formed when the child is grown up.

But opium is not only used as a medicine. It has what may be called its society use, and it is of course against this that the anti-opium movement is chiefly directed. We do not propose to discuss the matter, but simply to collect a few facts as to the occasions on which it is polite, indeed indispensable, to take opium. First of all, let it be remembered that, whereas in China opium is habitually smoked, in India it is usually drunk, and the habit of smoking it is, even by those who drink it, looked down upon as disreputable and demoralising. Its use in connection with ceremonials is commonest in the Native States, and especially among the Rajputs and allied castes. It is there an invariable feature of all the great occasions of life—betrothals, weddings, birth of a male child, first shaving of a male child's head, for twelve days after death, at reconciliations, &c. For instance, at the betrothal ceremony, it takes the place of our wedding-cake. It is provided by the bride's family, and consumed first by the bridegroom, and then by the whole company, who drink it from the palm of the host's hand. No reconciliation of enemies is possible without it: 'If either of the two parties decline to take opium, it is understood that he is not disposed to abide by his promises.' In some castes letters are begun with a prayer 'asking the addressee to take, on the writer's account, double the quantity of his daily allowance.' 'When a respectable old man dies, the use of opium in honour of his memory is indispensable. During the first eleven days after his death, when the people from the surrounding villages come in crowds to offer condolence, *kasumbha*—a decoction of opium—has to be supplied to them and their servants.' Afterwards, on the thirtieth day, a great entertainment is given, and the host's credit is proportionate to the amount of opium he distributes. Of its use on such occasions, the Maharaja of Durbhanga in his note very judiciously says that to stop it 'would be not only an unnecessary restriction on the freedom of the subject, but it might, and, I think, would, lead also to the increased consumption of alcohol. This fear was expressed by a great number of witnesses.'

Few points brought to light by the Commission are more remarkable than the conflict of opinion which exists as to the relative injuriousness of opium-smoking and drinking when carried to excess. As has already been observed, the former is the fashion in China, the latter in India, and the medical evidence varies with the fashion. It is true that Sir W. Roberts says that 'it cannot be taken to have been adequately proved that moderate opium-smoking, taken by itself, and apart from its surroundings, and from disease or semi-starvation, has any prejudicial effect on health.' Yet 'opium-smoking was strongly denounced before the Commission by Indian witnesses of all classes, many of whom were not opposed to the use of crude opium in the form of pills as a stimulant or restorative.' The opinion of medical and other officers in the farther east was almost unanimous in favour of smoking.

'I always consider that one dram swallowed will require the same treatment as three drams smoked,' writes an English doctor of twenty years' experience at Chefoo. But it seems to be universally admitted that smoking is the more *seductive* habit, which doubtless accounts for its prevalence among the Chinese. In this connection we cannot do better than quote the words of Mr Allen, Consul at Chefoo, words which will add to the desire felt by so many for the opening up and development of China by one of the Western powers: 'I firmly believe that the abuse of opium-smoking is an effect of evil, not a cause; a punishment, not a vice. Consequently, the remedies for the evils of opium-smoking to excess will be found, not by restricting or forbidding the opium trade, but by promoting among the Chinese a healthier state of things, material, mental, and moral, and thereby dissipating those feelings of *envy* and discontent which produce the desire for the delights of opium.'

THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF JOHN PERCIVAL.

CHAPTER II.

THE coach was crawling softly up the hill. In daylight half of the passengers would have walked up the ascent which was within a short distance of Duntrum, but they were all benumbed with the cold and the darkness, which was so intense that John, when he looked out, could see nothing but the white speck of the lamp, travelling along a black line which might be a hedge or a wall, and was only visible as the light passed over it. It was like putting out his head into some awful abyss of nothing, his eyes hurting him in this black gloom which abolished them and their use. The big vehicle groaning under its burden crept on, labouring like some huge animal, jingling, creaking, reluctant, going on through the cold and the dark.

John shouted 'Stop! Stop!' with a stentorian voice. 'A lady has fallen out of the coach! A passenger has fallen out of the coach!' he shouted, repeating it again and again, then opening the door, got out himself, dropping upon the invisible road. But it was not till some minutes later that the coach could be brought to a standstill, and he could get possession of one of the lamps, tearing it out of its place.

'She must be lying in the road,' he said; 'she was an old woman unable to walk.' He held the lamp to the ground as if at any moment he might tread her underfoot. By this time other dark figures were detaching themselves from amidst their heaped-up wraps from the top of the coach and jumping down, stamping their feet upon the iron and ice of the frozen ruts.

'What is it? Who is it? An old body? Bless us all, an old body. She will just get her death!' There was a chorus of voices and

of warm breath going up on the still air. The guard and John, each with a lamp, walked down to the bottom of the hill, accompanied vaguely by several scarcely decipherable attendants.

'I fell asleep,' he said, explaining himself to the night, scarcely conscious of any auditor, 'and then she was sitting there close up in the corner, as she had been since we left Edinburgh, and would never speak: but when I woke up, the door was wide open, swinging, and there was nobody'—He added, after a moment, as if he had suddenly discovered that face: 'Some woman passing on the road shut to the door with a bang: and that woke me.' It seemed to him as he related this that he was telling an incident in a dream: and yet he was sure it was quite true.

'A woman on the road; did you see a woman on the road? there's few foot-passengers here at this hour of the night,' said the guard.

'I saw her as clear as I see you.' He held up his lamp instinctively to the face of the other which was bent like his own on the ground.

'One of you,' cried the guard, 'hurry up the hill and stop her if she's gone that way. She canna have gone far on this steep road. Stop her and see what she knows.'

But no wayfarer was found on the ascending road, nor could all the light of the lamps find any trace of any one who had fallen. The inhabitants of the first wayside cottage at the foot of the hill were imperiously knocked up by the guard and put upon the trace.

'We canna stop the coach whatever happens,' he cried, 'but we'll send out a search party from Duntrum immediate. How long were you sleepin'?' he added peremptorily to John, who looked at his watch in the light of the lamp and answered:

'Perhaps an hour.'

'An hour is a long time,' said the guard, knitting his brows. 'As far back as the brig we would be then, and at a smart pace, for the horses, poor things, scented their stables. Take your lantern, lad, if you have one, and go as far as that.—On ay, ye'll be paid, you needna be feared for that. Will ye come, sir, or bide? I daurna stop the coach.'

John looked into the blankness of darkness before him and shivered, but it was not this only that moved him. He felt certain that the catastrophe, whatever it was, must have happened within a much shorter time than an hour, that it had just occurred, indeed, when he woke, and when the sudden blast of the cold wind roused him with its searching chill. He felt convinced that he and his companions had already come to the furthest limits in which the accident, if it was an accident, could have occurred. His head was confused with the effort to find an explanation. What was it? After searching so far, he became convinced that the clue was not to be found on the road. Where then was it to be found? He made no answer either to this question in his own mind or to the guard, but turned back, leaving the others with the sleepy and startled cottagers, father and son, who had been roused

from their beds, for it was already late, and were reluctantly accepting the directions of the guard, whose red coat made a spot like a fire in the darkness, lighted up by the lantern which he had attached to his belt. John turned back and began to reclimb the hill, throwing the flash of his lamp on every roughness of the road, and making his way back to where the coach smoked into the night, the breath of the passengers and the emanations from the horses forming a mist of life, which rose dim yet consolatory across the light of the lamp in the midst of that chill of winter and darkness. As he came up to it his foot caught upon something almost under the hindmost wheel, and he gave a loud cry, which brought every one on foot around him. He set down his lamp on the frozen ground, and they all clustered over it in a circle. It was the heavy bundle of the mail-bags strapped together, one end of the leather strap still entangled with the step of the coach. The guard pulled them up with an exclamation.

'Dod! she's trailed the mails with her,' and then he too uttered a cry, which was fierce with instant terror and dismay. 'But where's the bag from Dunscore?'

The two lamps were immediately fixed upon this new problem, and their light shone upon a circle of faces, the guard's blanched with sudden alarm, all turned towards that dark mass gleaming with its metal clasps.

'It's come loose,' said one voice; 'it'll be on the road.'

'Bah! a wheen letters,' said another; 'you'll no stop us in the cold for that.'

'It's just a simple accident,' said the third. But the guard held up to the light the ends of a strap cut through, clean and clear, evidently by some very sharp instrument.

'It's been nae woman, it's been some robber in disguise, it's been a got-up thing,' he cried, throwing a glance of suspicion at John who stood aghast, holding the lamp unconsciously quite close to the bundle of the mail-bags, and gazing at them as if there was something there that could elucidate the mystery. He began to put one thing to another confusedly in his mind.

'A got-up thing. Could it be a got-up thing? It was a woman certainly,' he said to himself but aloud, 'a woman certainly, and a small woman.'

'Maybe a laddie in a woman's dress,' said an officious bystander.

'Were there mony letters in't?' said another, with unseasonable curiosity.

'And what,' said another authoritatively, 'had the mail-bags to do in the inside of the coach?'

This question made a silence in the group, which the guard broke suddenly and loudly.

'Get back to your seats,' he said, 'and Jamie, push them to their stiffest, those beasts of yours: this has to be seen into. It's robbery on the Queen's highway,' he said, with a vague threat which cowed them all.

John got to the lodging which had been prepared for him, with a much perplexed and disturbed brain. It annoyed him beyond reason to think he had perhaps taken a mis-

chievous boy for a lady, and wasted his polite attentions upon a young thief; yet perhaps, because he did not wish to believe this, this became an idea quite impossible to him after a little thought. He could not quite tell how he came to the conclusion, but he felt perfectly confident that a woman it was, perhaps not an invalid, as appeared, nay, certainly not an invalid; he remembered now the swift movement of surprise she had made when he suddenly opened the door on her side with the soup he had taken such trouble to get for her. She had flung herself aside from the door, but it was a woman's movement, not that of a boy. And then the woman's face at the opened door, looking in one moment from outside, closing it with such a hasty bang. No doubt of that being a woman's face, a young face, a pretty face, in a glow of colour as he remembered it. Could that be the wrapped-up old rheumatic person with the poultice on her cheek? His heart gave a jump partly of self-derision, the dolt he had been! not to discover a bonnie lass even underneath the mountain of veils and wraps. He could have sworn that not the cleverest should have so taken him in. But why, after all, should that be *her*? Most likely it was somebody passing, a country maid on the road, good-natured, giving a push to the open door as she passed. Would a fugitive have shut it with a clang like that? Not likely!

John was very ready for his supper and for his bed afterwards, being young and healthy: but his sleep was very broken, and that woman's face kept looking in upon him, from between the curtains and behind the door, at every turn and toss. He began to see it, better than he had done in the real moment of seeing it; a pretty face, rather redder than was consistent with his idea of beauty, with a curious flash in the eyes, and anxious lines in the forehead. He saw it perfectly clear in those visions of the night, the hair dark and ruffled, a hood half drawn over the head, the lips apart. No doubt at all that it was a pretty face. And he remembered she glanced at him with a sort of laugh about the corners of her mouth, which changed to a look of fright as she saw him wake up. He had not thought of it at first, but certainly that was her expression, and the clang with which the door closed was probably due to that surprise. Was this the old woman with the rheumatics in her head? Could it be she who had squeaked and stormed at him, and ordered him to 'snooze'? He kept going over and over it in his broken sleep, seeing her more clearly every time he woke, reading more and more meaning in the details of her face which came to him one by one. Were the eyes blue or brown? Was the ruffled hair light or dark? He could not make out those most essential details, yet he thought he should recognise her wherever he saw her. The glimpse he had got of her in reality seemed nothing to the light upon her which came from his dreams. It was like seeing her again and again, and getting familiar with her face. He thought that if he ever saw it again, it would haunt him all his life. But he should see it again, of that he was determined. Then

he suddenly thought to himself with a gleam of surprised pleasure what a good thing it was, after all, that he had come to Duntrum! This seemed all at once to him a good, a delightful, a most entertaining and charming thing, but, I fear, he would have been quite at a loss, if he had been asked for an explanation, to say why.

The incident, as was natural, made a great noise in the country, and there was an examination held before the sheriff at which John was the principal witness. He described the old body to the great amusement of all present, the lump on her cheek, and white edge of the plaster in which it was tied up, just showing beyond the great black muffler in which her face was enveloped, the Spanish veil, with large thick silken flowers, between the interstices of which only the fact that there was a face could be discovered, the shrill strange voice which he now felt to be assumed. And, finally, the young face that had appeared at the window.

'You were awake by it—by what?' said the questioner, 'by the sharp closing of the door?'

'Yes,' said John.

'Then, if the noise only woke you, how could you see the face of the person who made it?'

'No, it was not the noise,' said John, 'it was the blast of the cold air coming in: and then the face appeared in the open, against the night, looking up a little, catching the light of the lamp. For a moment it moved with the coach, then the door was shut.'

'Moved with the coach?' said the interrogator. 'Do you mean she was walking by the side?'

'I begin to think,' said John slowly, 'that she must have been on the step: then dropped out of sight, and shut the door.'

'Are you sure, Mr Percival,' said the sheriff, 'that the pretty face at the door was not a dream? We all know that pretty faces are part of young men's dreams: and you are not sure at which moment you awoke.'

'I did not say,' said John, 'that it was a pretty face.'

'Ah!' said the sheriff.

'Still it is true: it was so: and young: but it was not a dream. I saw the lady quite clearly.'

'It was a lady, then? You thought at first it might be a country lass passing.'

'I am not sure that it was a lady,' said John, 'but I certainly think so—I'— He paused, then with a slight start of astonishment, seemed to stop an exclamation that was on his lips.

'What is the matter?' cried his questioner. 'You are not so sure as you were that you saw any young woman at all?'

'I am perfectly sure—on my oath, and with complete recollection of what happened, that I saw,' cried John, 'exactly what I have said, a young woman with a great deal of expression in her face, and a hood on her head, looking in at me for a moment through the open door.' He did not look at the sheriff as he spoke, but strained his eyes, interrogating the faces before him between the table at which he stood and the door. His heart had not

quieted yet from that start, though his mind had. He had thought he saw her again, the same face, and had been startled, and then had said to himself how unlikely it was, and looking again had found there was no such thing before him, among the score or two of people who had assembled in the room. There were very few women at all: it must have been a temporary illusion, for certainly now there was no one visible who resembled that face at all: but his heart continued to beat, though he succeeded in quieting his mind and reason as I have described.

Many curious things happened in connection with this mystery. The letters which had been posted in Dunscore on that night—as was proved by the postmarks—almost without exception reached their destination within a day or two, but with the Edinburgh postmark added to that of Dunscore. There was an exception, and that was one letter addressed to the Duntrum Bank, in which John by this time had taken his place, a favoured supernumerary, with all the prestige of his Edinburgh antecedents and connection, to learn the country work. It was curious that the incident with which his name was already associated, and which formed so remarkable a part of his scanty and young experience, should thus be brought under his notice again. He heard nothing else spoken of for the first month, at least, of his dwelling in Duntrum. The one lost letter was from a small bank in the little town of Dunscore. It had enclosed several bank bills to be collected and other papers of commercial value, and was in fact, perhaps, the only important missive in the stolen bag, judging from a commercial point of view. From the discussions in the bank where he acquired the last information on the subject, John learnt that various unfortunate persons had reason to rejoice over the loss of this letter. Two or three poor men almost bankrupt had their ruin staved off for a moment, and the dread period of protested bills and mercantile dishonour deferred at least for a time: and there were many whisperings and questions whether any of the persons concerned could have been capable of so bold a stroke. But even the inventive genius of a country town, always so bold in attributing guilt, could not come to any agreement in respect to this. It could not even be said that any one was suspected. The thing had been accomplished so mysteriously in such a complete way, without leaving a trace, that the local inquisition was completely baffled. John found with mingled annoyance and relief that his own vision of the young woman at the coach door was not relied upon. He had probably dreamt it, most people thought. Like the sheriff, the community concluded that it was nothing wonderful if a young man suddenly awakened should think he saw a girl's face; probably he had been dreaming about some particular girl. And in those days the hypothesis of a woman having done any deed of note was rarely accepted and with difficulty. The natural rôle of the woman in those days was to keep quiet and behind backs. She was not suspected of taking any leading part. The wrapped-up invalid in the country whom the guard and several other

persons besides John had seen, must have been a man in this disguise everybody was certain. It was not a thing that could have been done by a woman. No, no; no woman could have had the nerve to do it, the people in Duntrum said.

All these things John Percival turned over in his mind, and examined as much as he had the opportunity of doing. He listened to all the gossip about all the persons concerned, and especially of those who might be supposed to be advantaged by the loss of the mail-bag, with very keen interest, and formed within himself one hypothesis after another, several of which perished in the framing, so difficult was it to make the circumstances fit in. And in the meantime he himself became a personage of great importance, and much sought after in the gentlest society of Duntrum, which was understood to be very exclusive and difficult of access. John was the representative of Percival's Bank, one of the oldest establishments in Edinburgh, which was very much in his favour. And he was, besides, gifted with a story to tell, which was almost a greater recommendation. Over and over again during that winter he was required to give his famous description of his companion in the coach, of his own attempted attentions, the soup he procured in vain, the wraps that were kicked away. There was one circumstance which he never mentioned, but which touched his heart with the strangest thrill of kindness, which was that his tribute of the oranges had disappeared along with the old lady. It was as if she had not liked to hurt his feelings by rejecting his benevolences altogether. This curious experience inspired John with a slight inclination towards the dramatic which he had not been conscious of before, and almost made him believe before the season was over that perhaps if he had been left to follow his own devices, he might have been a great actor as well as a great artist or poet. At last, however, he got over his inclination to start at every girl's face he met and examine it critically on the score of a fancied likeness to the young woman of his vision. He said that most girls were like each other, as his final conclusion. They had all fine complexions in Duntrum.

Nevertheless, there was one evening at one of the many little dances that were given in that cheerful place, when John's composure was very much put to the test. He was taken to this entertainment by his own chief comrade and crony, young Maxwell, the son of the resident partner in the Duntrum Bank, who was in something of John's own position, more highly favoured than the other clerks and naturally one of the *élite*.

'Come, and I'll show you the flower of Wittisdale, the rose of Duntrum,' said this young man. 'She has been away in Edinburgh the whole winter; but mind you, none of your cantrips here. I warn you off before you see her. I'll have no interlopers cutting me out. Turn the heads of all the others if you like, with your acting and your stories, but this one is mine.'

'They are all just as like each other as apples in a basket,' said the cynic John.

Nevertheless, when he went lightly into the brightly lighted room following his friend, John in a moment felt his heart leap into his throat: for there standing a little behind the mistress of the house with a curious little air of consciousness which seemed to him to prove that she was on her guard and ready for the startled look which he gave her, full in her face as if it had been a blow—to his extreme confusion and surprise there stood suddenly before him the woman of the coach door, the woman of his dreams.

PHOTOGRAPHY IN COLOURS.

Ever since it became possible to obtain a picture by casting an image formed by a lens on a chemical surface sensitive to light, there has existed the idea that such pictures would some day be produced endowed with all the lovely colours of nature. Even the best photograph, it must be admitted, falls very short of the original from which it was taken. In form, in perspective, it is perfect, its one shortcoming being that it is in Monochrome. If we peep beneath a photographer's focussing cloth just before he takes an outdoor picture, we shall see on the ground glass screen of the camera a very beautiful thing; a perfect image in miniature of the landscape clothed in all its natural tints. We can see the same thing on the white table of the Camera Obscura which can still be found at places of holiday resort. The Parisian scene-painter Daguerre used such an appliance to help him in his work, and it is said that his first experiments were prompted by the longing he had to make those fleeting coloured pictures permanent.

Again and again has it been asserted that the problem of photography in the colours of nature was solved. Companies have been formed to purchase secrets which were known only to one man, this individual being generally a seedy adventurer who had nothing to sell—but who recognised the value of that commercial doctrine which teaches that where there is a demand, a supply is sure to follow. Within the past twenty years half a dozen such projects have been brought before public notice; people have believed in them, and have invested their money in them, but we are still as far from Photography in the colours of nature as was Daguerre and his contemporary workers of half a century back.

It is true that advances have been made in the better rendering of coloured objects. That is to say, the photographer is now able by the means which Chemistry has placed at his disposal to render the colours of an object in their true tone relation to one another. Until quite recent years a photograph would reproduce blue as white, yellow and red as black, and would in the same way play havoc with many other colours. But this defect has been now

remedied, and an oil-painting or other coloured object can be reproduced by the camera with the colours expressed by correct gradations much in the same way that a skilful engraver would translate them into Monochrome. We are also no longer bound in a photograph to one or two arbitrary tints, such as black, gray, and purple brown, but can have a photograph produced in any one colour which we may desire. Another forward step is found in the matter of permanence, so that a photograph of to-day need not be the fleeting thing that it once was, but can be made as permanent, at any rate, as the paper upon which it is supported.

But all this progress in the art, satisfactory though it be, brings us no nearer the solution of the problem of photography in the colours of nature. True it is that there are many methods by which photographs are printed in colours, and very effective some of these pictures are, but they employ coloured inks or pigments of some kind, and although they have a photographic foundation, it would be false to describe them as photographs in colour.

In the meantime, as a kind of contribution to the subject, Mr Frederick Ives of Philadelphia has produced a wonderfully clever instrument which he calls the Photochromoscope, by which the images of certain objects appear clothed in as near an approach to natural colouring as it is possible to imagine. In general appearance this instrument resembles the old-fashioned stereoscope, for it has two eyeholes, through which its mysteries are viewed. And mysterious and wonderful do the pictures shown by this apparatus appear to be, for not only are the objects coloured, but they stand out in such relief that it is difficult to realise that one cannot grasp them with the hand. But they cannot be described as photographs in colour, by which is generally meant pictures direct from the camera, in which different parts of the subject reflect to the eye the same tints as are found in the original. For Mr Ives' pictures are but illusions, visionary things which are conjured up by a combination of coloured screens, reflectors, and plain photographs obtained in a special camera. Each picture is in reality made up of six different photographs of the same object—their images being combined into one by the help of the reflectors and with the further aid of the eyes which view them. The pictures for this instrument are produced in a special form of camera, the manipulation of which will present no great difficulty. It resembles the camera used for stereoscopic work in that it has twin lenses, but here nearly all resemblance to an ordinary camera ends. It takes on one plate simultaneously three pairs of pictures, one pair selecting from the original all the red portions of the subject, another pair picking out the blue-violet portions, and the remaining pair dealing with the green parts. This is managed by coloured screens and reflectors which allow only rays of certain colours to pass them, and as a result there are produced three pairs of negatives of the same subject, each different and incomplete.

From these negative pictures positives are printed on a duplicate plate of the same size, and when these are finished and dry, the plate is cut across twice with a diamond, so that the pairs are separated into three distinct stereoscopic pictures.

We have now, so to speak, a dissected picture. We have pulled the original to pieces and have sorted out its colours into their component parts. But it must be distinctly understood that our paired positives exhibit no colour whatever; they are in sober gray, black, and white, like the ordinary product of the camera, but all the same the image in each case represents a certain colour sensation, red, green, or blue violet as the case may be; and on these plates too are registered the mixed colours of the original, each plate analysing the tints and picking out its own part of the compound colour.

According to the old theory of Brewster, the colours of the spectrum can be sorted out into primaries, secondaries, &c., the three primary colours being Red, Yellow, and Blue, the mixture of any two of these primaries producing a secondary tint, which is complimentary to the remaining primary. Thus we may mingle blue and yellow, and produce green, which is complimentary to the primary which we have left untouched—namely, red. Or we may mix red and yellow to make orange, which is complimentary to blue; or red and blue to make purple, which is complimentary to yellow. And the theory is correct so far as mere pigments are concerned, as any one can ascertain for himself by the help of a child's paint-box. But when we come to experiment with the pure light from the spectrum itself the theory falls to pieces. It was Young who first pointed out that all colour phenomena could be accounted for, by supposing that the retinal nerves were of three kinds, each being sensitive to a particular colour, one set of nerves being excited by blue violet, another by red, and the third by green, a mixed colour such as yellow exciting both the red and the green nerves in certain definite proportions. Young's theory remained in abeyance until Helmholtz and Maxwell confirmed his results, with the result that it is now generally admitted that if there be three primary colours they must be red, green, and dark blue or violet.

Mr Ives has kept the Young-Helmholtz theory constantly in view while working out the details of his Photochromoscope, and it must be admitted that practice has in this case borne out the truth of theory in a very satisfactory manner. The three pairs of photographs, obtained in the manner already described, are framed in a flexible holder so that they fold over, and embrace three sides of the Photochromoscope, which are furnished with glasses of the necessary tints. Each photograph absorbs its own proper colour sensation; and these are combined upon the retina by means of reflectors, each one adding its quota of colour to the combined picture.

A few decades back a stereoscope and its double pictures could be found in every drawing-room, and visitors never seemed to tire of looking at the resemblance to solid things

thereby produced. The Photochromoscope gives the same excellent effects with the added charm of colour, and we may presume that possibly these improved pictures may become as popular as their plain predecessors. It seems certain at any rate that by means of the special camera, which will be presently introduced, any amateur photographer of intelligence will be able to take the triple negatives, and from them can prepare 'Chromograms' for insertion in the new instrument. The process is at present only applicable to such objects as will bear a somewhat long exposure; for what is commonly known as instantaneous work, it is inadmissible.

POLITICS AND THE MAY-FLY.

By JOHN BUCHAN, Author of *Sir Quixote*, &c.

THE farmer of Clachlands was a Tory, stern and unbending. It was the tradition of his family, from his grandfather, who had been land-steward to Lord Manorwater, down to his father, who had once seconded a vote of confidence in the sitting member. Such traditions, he felt, were not to be lightly despised; things might change, empires might wax and wane, but his obligation continued; a sort of perverted *noblesse oblige* was the farmer's watchword in life; and by dint of much energy and bad language, he lived up to it.

As fate would have it, the Clachlands ploughman was a Radical of Radicals. He had imbibed his opinions early in life from a speaker on the green of Marchthorn, and ever since, by the help of a weekly penny paper and an odd volume of Gladstone's speeches, had continued his education. Such opinions in a conservative country-side carry with them a reputation for either abnormal cleverness or abnormal folly. The fact that he was a keen fisher, a famed singer of songs, and the best judge of horses in the place, caused the verdict of his neighbours to incline to the former, and he passed for something of an oracle among his fellows. The blacksmith, who was the critic of the neighbourhood, summed up his character in a few words. 'Him,' said he in a tone of mingled dislike and admiration, 'him! He would sweer white was black the morn, and dod! he would prove it tae.'

It so happened in the early summer, when the land was green, and the trout plashed in the river, that Her Majesty's Government saw fit to appeal to an intelligent country. Among a people whose politics fight hard with their religion for a monopoly of their interests, feeling ran high and brotherly kindness departed. Houses were divided against themselves. Men formerly of no consideration found themselves suddenly important, and discovered that their intellects and conscience, which they had hitherto valued at little, were things of serious interest to their betters. The lurid light of publicity was shed upon the lives of the rival candidates; men formerly accounted worthy and respectable

were proved no better than whited sepulchres; and each man was filled with a morbid concern for his fellow's character and beliefs.

The farmer of Clachlands called a meeting of his labourers in the great dusty barn, which had been the scene of many similar gatherings. His speech on the occasion was vigorous and to the point. 'Ye are a' my men,' he said, 'an' I'll see that ye vote richt. Ye're unmeddicated folk, and ken naething aboot the matter, sae ye just tak' my word for't, that the Tories are in the richt and vote accordingly. I've been a guid maister to ye, and it's shurely better to plesure me, than a wheen lecin' scoondrels whae tramp the country wi' leather bags and printit trash.'

Then arose from the back the ploughman, strong in his convictions. 'Listen to me, you men,' says he: 'just vote as ye think best. The maister's a guid maister, as he says, but he's nocht to dae wi' your votin'. It's what they ca' inteemedation to interfere wi' onybody in this matter. So mind that, an' vote for the workin'-man an' his richts.'

Then ensued a war of violent words.

'Is this a meetin' in my barn, or a penny-waddin'?'

'Ca't what ye please. I canna let ye mislead the men.'

'Whae talks about misleadin'? Is't misleadin' to lead them richt?'

'The question,' said the ploughman solemnly, 'is what you ca' richt.'

'William Laverhope, if ye werena a guid plooman, ye wad gang post-haste oot o' here the morn.'

'I carena what ye say. I'll stand up for the richts o' thae men.'

'Men;' this with deep scorn. 'I could mak better men than thae wi' a stick oot o' the plantin'.'

'Ay, ye say that noo, an' the morn ye'll be ca'in' ilka yin o' them *Mister*, a' for their votes.'

The farmer left in dignified disgust, vanquished but still dangerous; the ploughman in triumph mingled with despair. For he knew that his fellow-labourers cared not a whit for politics, but would follow to the letter their master's bidding.

The next morning rose clear and fine. There had been a great rain for the past few days, and the burns were coming down broad and surly. The Clachlands Water was chafing by bank and bridge and threatening to enter the hay-field, and every little ditch and sheep-drain was carrying its tribute of peaty water to the greater flood. The farmer of Clachlands, as he looked over the landscape from the doorstep of his dwelling, marked the state of the weather and pondered over it.

He was not in a pleasant frame of mind that morning. He had been crossed by a ploughman, his servant. He liked the man, and so the obvious way of dealing with him—by making things uncomfortable or turning him off—was shut against him. But he burned to get the upperhand of him, and discomfit once for all one who had dared to question his wisdom

and good sense. If only he could get him to vote on the other side—but that was out of the question. If only he could keep him from voting—that was possible but unlikely. He might forcibly detain him, in which case he would lay himself open to the penalties of the law, and be nothing the gainer. For the victory which he desired was a moral one, not a triumph of force. He would like to circumvent him by cleverness, to score against him fairly and honourably on his own ground. But the thing was hard, and, as it seemed to him at the moment, impossible.

Suddenly, as he looked over the morning landscape, a thought struck him and made him slap his legs and chuckle hugely. He walked quickly up and down the gravelled walk. 'Losh, it's guid. I'll dae't. I'll dae't, if the weather juist haws.'

His unseemly mirth was checked by the approach of some one who found the farmer engaged in the minute examination of gooseberry leaves. 'I'm concerned aboot thae busses,' he was saying; 'they've been ill lookit to, an' we'll no hae half a crop.' And he went off, still smiling, and spent a restless forenoon in the Marchthorn market.

In the evening he met the ploughman, as he returned from the turnip-singling, with his hoe on his shoulder. The two men looked at one another with the air of those who know that all is not well between them. Then the farmer spoke with much humility.

'I maybe spoke rayther severe yestreen,' he said. 'I hope I didna hurt your feelings.'

'Na, na! No me!' said the ploughman airily.

'Because I've been thinking ower the maitter, an' I admit that a man has a richt to his ain thochts. A'boddy should hae principles an' stick to them,' said the farmer, with the manner of one making a recondite quotation.

'Ay,' he went on, 'I respect ye, William, for your consistency. Ye're an example to us a'.'

The other shuffled and looked unhappy. He and his master were on the best of terms, but these unnecessary compliments were not usual in their intercourse. He began to suspect, and the farmer, who saw his mistake, hastened to change the subject.

'Graund weather for the fishin',' said he.

'Oh, is it no?' said the other, roused to excited interest by this home topic. 'I tell ye by the morn they'll be takin' as they've never ta'en this 'ear. Doon in the big pool in the Clachlands Water, at the turn o' the turnip-field, there are twae or three pounders, and aiblins yin o' twae pund. I saw them mysel' when the water was low. It's ower big the noo, but when it gangs doon the morn, and gets the colour o' porter, I'se warrant I could whup them oot o' there wi' the flee.'

'D'ye say sac,' said the farmer sweetly. 'Weel, it's a lang time since I tried the fishin', but I yince was keen on't. Come in bye, William; I've something ye might like to see.'

From a corner he produced a rod, and handed it to the other. It was a very fine rod indeed, one which the owner had gained in a fishing competition many years before,

and treasured accordingly. The ploughman examined it long and critically. Then he gave his verdict. 'It's the bravest rod I ever saw, wi' a fine hickory butt, an' guid greenheart tap and middle. It wad cast the sma'est flee, and haud the biggest troot.'

'Weel,' said the farmer, genially smiling, 'ye have a half-holiday the morn when ye gang to the poll. There'll be plenty o' time in the evening to try a cast wi't. I'll lend it ye for the day.'

The man's face brightened. 'I wad tak it verra kindly,' he said, 'if ye wad. My ain yin is no muckle worth, and, as ye say, I'll hae time for a cast the morn's nicht.'

'Dinna mention it. Did I ever let ye see my flee-book? Here it is,' and he produced a thick flannel book from a drawer. 'There's a maist miscellaneous collection, for a' waters an' a' weathers. I got a heap o' them frae auld Lord Manorwater, when I was a laddie, and used to cairry his basket.'

But the ploughman heeded him not, being deep in the examination of its mysteries. Very gingerly he handled the tiny spiders and hackles, surveying them with the eye of a connoisseur.

'If there's anything there ye think at a' like the water, I'll be verra pleased if ye'll try't.'

The other was somewhat put out by this extreme friendliness. At another time he would have refused shamefacedly, but now the love of sport was too strong in him. 'Ye're far ower guid,' he said; 'thae twae patrick wings are the verra things I want, an' I dinna think I've ony at hame. I'm awfu' gratefu' to ye, an' I'll bring them back the morn's nicht.'

'Guid-e'en,' said the farmer, as he opened the door, 'an' I wish ye may hae a guid catch.' And he turned in again, smiling sardonically.

The next morning was like the last, save that a little wind had risen, which blew freshly from the west. White cloudlets drifted across the blue, and the air was as clear as spring-water. Down in the hollow the roaring torrent had sunk to a full, lipping stream, and the colour had changed from a turbid yellow to a clear, delicate brown. In the town of Marchthorn, it was a day of wild excitement, and the quiet Clachlands road bustled with horses and men. The labourers in the fields scarce stopped to look at the passers, for in the afternoon they too would have their chance, when they might journey to the town in all importance, and record their opinions of the late Government.

The ploughman of Clachlands spent a troubled forenoon. His nightly dreams had been of landing great fish, and now his waking thoughts were of the same. Politics for the time were forgotten. This was the day which he had looked forward to for so long, when he was to have been busied in deciding doubtful voters, and breathing activity into the ranks of his cause. And lo! the day had come and found his thoughts elsewhere. For all such things are, at the best, of fleeting interest, and do not stir men otherwise than sentimentally; but the old kindly love of field-sports, the joy in the smell of the earth and the living air, lie very close to a man's heart. So this apostate, as he cleaned his turnip rows, was filled with the

excitement of the sport, and had no thoughts above the memory of past exploits and the anticipation of greater to come.

Mid-day came, and with it his release. He roughly calculated that he could go to the town, vote, and be back in two hours, and so have the evening clear for his fishing. There had never been such a day for the trout in his memory, so cool and breezy and soft, nor had he ever seen so glorious a water. 'If ye dinna get a fou basket the nicht, an' a feed the morn, William Laverhope, your richt hand has forgot its cunning,' said he to himself.

He took the rod carefully out, put it together, and made trial casts on the green. He tied the flies on a cast and put it ready for use in his own primitive fly-book, and then bestowed the whole in the breast-pocket of his coat. He had arrayed himself in his best, with a white rose in his button-hole, for it behoved a man to be well dressed on such an occasion as voting. But yet he did not start. Some fascination in the rod made him linger and try it again and again.

Then he resolutely laid it down and made to go. But something caught his eye—the swirl of the stream as it left the great pool at the hay-field, or the glimpse of still, gleaming water. The impulse was too strong to be resisted. There was time enough and to spare. The pool was on his way to the town, he would try one cast ere he started, just to see if the water was good. So, with rod on his shoulder, he set off.

Somewhere in the background a man, who had been watching his movements, turned away, laughing silently, and filling his pipe.

A great trout rose to the fly in the hay-field pool, and ran the line up-stream till he broke it. The ploughman swore deeply, and stamped on the ground with aggravation. His blood was up, and he prepared for battle. Carefully, skillfully he fished, with every nerve on tension and ever-watchful eyes. Meanwhile, miles off in the town the bustle went on, but the eager fisherman by the river heeded it not.

Late in the evening, just at the darkening, a figure arrayed in Sunday clothes, but all wet and mud-stained, came up the road to the farm. Over his shoulder he carried a rod, and in one hand a long string of noble trout. But the expression on his face was not triumphant; a settled melancholy overspread his countenance, and he groaned as he walked.

Mephistopheles stood by the garden-gate, smoking and surveying his fields. A well-satisfied smile hovered about his mouth, and his air was the air of one well at ease with the world.

'Weel, I see ye've had guid sport,' said he to the melancholy Faust. 'By-the-by, I didna notice ye in the town. And losh! man, what in the world have ye dune to your guid claes?'

The other made no answer. Slowly he took the rod to pieces and strapped it up; he took the fly-book from his pocket; he selected two fish from the heap; and laid the whole before the farmer.

'There ye are,' said he, 'and I'm verra

much obliged to ye for your kindness.' But his tone was one of desperation and not of gratitude; and his face, as he went onward, was a study in eloquence repressed.

'HARVEYISED' STEEL ARMOUR FOR THE NAVY.

PUBLIC attention has, of late, been keenly directed to the British navy, and the estimates recently advanced for its augmentation; causing the memorandum, issued by the First Lord of the Admiralty, to be scanned with even more than the usual interest. Turning to the section of that document dealing with 'Ordnance and armour plate,' we learn that during the past year 'various experimental armour plates have been submitted for purpose of trial. None of these, however, have as yet shown qualities equal to those possessed by the "Harveyised" steel armour at present used. Consequently, armour of that description is still being contracted for.'

In view of the large amount of 'Harveyised' steel being now turned out, we purpose laying before our readers some succinct account of this new material, its special properties and advantages, concluding with some brief remarks on its manufacture.

The Harvey process is one by which low grade or soft steel is converted, at moderate cost, into material possessing great decremental hardness on its face—namely, intense hardness is produced on the surface of an otherwise soft plate; the advantage of such treatment being that great resistance to penetration is secured, with an almost total absence of cracking. Had the armour plate the same intense hardness throughout as its surface, it would shatter and crack on being struck by a projectile, whereas by hardening only the face, the resistance to penetration of the face is combined with the tenacity and resistance to crack of the back, and the happy combination of great tenacity against shot, and no danger of splitting or shattering (hitherto deemed inseparable from very great hardness), is attained.

The 'Harveyising' of plates is performed by taking ordinary armour plates and planing one surface. The plate is then placed in a special furnace, with the planed surface upwards, and covered with a layer of animal charcoal, equal in thickness to itself; another plate is then laid with its planed surface downwards on the animal charcoal, which thus forms a sandwich between the two armour plates. Both plates are then completely covered in sand, and the furnace being closed, heat is applied, and maintained at a uniform temperature of some eighteen hundred degrees Fahrenheit, for about a fortnight, during which the charcoal gradually yields up its carbon to the plates, imparting to their surfaces great hardness; about a week elapses before cooling is sufficiently advanced to enable the plates to be removed, and nothing then remains, but machining and the subsequent process of chilling, for their completion. Simple as this process may appear in general outlines, its practical application is far from being unattended with difficulties in actual execution;

not the least of which consists in maintaining a constant and uniform heat for a fortnight. For this purpose, tubes pass beneath the lower plate, right through the furnace, and permit rods about half an inch in diameter to be inserted from each side, and the temperature taken by pyrometers.

The furnaces themselves call for some passing comment. Built of firebrick, with iron stay bars, according to the size of plate to be dealt with, they are furnished with a firebrick floor to carry the plates, the heat from coal fires passing over the plates, thence returning through flues beneath the floor to the chimney. The plates are lowered into the furnace, and removed from it by an overhead 'traveller' commanding the site.

The progress of 'Harveyising' has been as rapid as it is remarkable, England possessing three works and Scotland one work where the process is carried on. Her Majesty's ships *Renown*, *Majestic*, and *Magnificent* are equipped with 'Harveyised' steel armour, and further large orders are under execution.

Foreign nations are also utilising the new process, France, Germany, and Austria having extensive works fitted for its production. The United States Government also manufacture the armour; going further a-field, Japan is using the plates for her battleships. Meanwhile, official experiments by the governments of Great Britain, the United States, France, and Russia, leave no doubt as to the great value of Harveyised armour. Enough has been said to justify the conclusion of the official report: 'The consequence of adopting this new system (that is, "Harveyising") will be a great saving in cost for a given defence. By means of these improvements the power of defence obtainable with certain thicknesses and weights of armour has been very greatly increased, and this circumstance must considerably affect the designs of battleships to be laid down in the future.'

AFTER SUNSET.

ONE tremulous star above the deepening west;
The splash of waves upon a quiet beach;
A sleepy twitter from some hidden nest
Amidst the clustered ivy, out of reach.

The sheep-bell's tinkle from the daisied leas;
The rhythmic fall of homeward-wending feet;
A wind that croons amongst the leafy trees,
And dies away in whispers faint and sweet.

A pale young moon, whose slender silver bow
Creeps slowly up beyond the purple hill;
And seems to absorb the golden afterglow
Within the far horizon lingering still.

An open lattice and the scent of musk;
Then, through the slumbrous hush of earth and sky,
A tender mother-voice that in the dusk
Sings to a babe some old-world lullaby.

E. MATHESON.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 646.—Vol. XIII.

SATURDAY, MAY 16, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

DEATH VALLEY.

THE place to which the rather forbidding name of Death Valley has been given, is situated on the borders of California and Nevada. It is one of the loneliest, hottest, and most deadly and dangerous spots, not only in the United States, but in the whole world. It is no more than thirty-five miles long, and eight miles wide. It is a vast, sandy plain, standing something like 200 feet below the level of the sea. Originally a lake, it is now nothing more than the sink of the Amargosa River. On both sides, throughout its whole length, it is hemmed in by mountain-ranges rising to 11,000 feet above the sea-level; that on the west being the Telescope range, and that on the east, the Funeral range. Looking down the valley from one of the 'divides,' reveals a region which seems, on the first blush, to be much like other deserts in the Western States of the Union—the Colorado Desert, the Gila Desert, the Mohavè Desert, and the rest. But actual experience shows it to be a very different sort of place. In the waste regions just named, the sands are hot and blinding, and water is a rare commodity. In the Death Valley there is water, but it is highly impregnated with chemicals, and is poisonous. Stretching from the foot of the mountains are glittering fields of salt, alternating with miles of white sand, drawn in places into high mounds by the whirling blasts that sweep down the gorge. The land appears in curving outline like the waves of the sea. The hummocks are made of the so-called 'self-rising earth;' the crust is two or three inches thick, and very brittle; and underneath is a thin, slimy, salt mud of unmeasured depth, from which rescue is impossible.

Another curious feature of the valley is the phenomenon known as 'salt earth.' Innumerable pinnacles, each tapering to a point as fine as a needle, and each a foot big, rise in certain places in close array from the ground.

They are as hard as stone, and as dangerous to animal life as sharpened steel.

Death Valley received its name in the days of the Argonauts. About the middle of the year 1860, a wagon train, made up of a party of about thirty emigrants, passed through the Mormon settlements, *en route* for the New Eldorado. They ascended the Funeral Mountains, threaded their way down one of the few gorges, and entered the valley. Only two men managed to reach the other side: the others were killed by the heat and thirst, or by falling into the hidden quicksands. Only a few months ago an investigating party sent out by the United States Land Office, found at a lonely spot in Mesquite Valley, an offshoot of Death Valley, an old wagon head, a tire, and some pieces of old iron, relics of the famous emigrant train which descended the valley thirty-six years ago, and perished—every one of the party of forty being lost. Incidents such as these—and they might be multiplied—earned for Death Valley a most unenviable reputation, and emigrants making across country for the gold-fields, learned to give it a wide berth. But a story got abroad that there was precious metal in the neighbourhood, and men, lured by the goblin gold, and consequently careless of their lives, started to explore it. A survivor from one of the early emigrant trains brought into San Francisco a story of how he stumbled along in a cañon of the mountains west of the valley, and found a spring of water; and how, sitting idly by the spring, he broke off a bit of the exposed rock, and was surprised to find it was of metallic substance. It turned out to be silver, and there was a rush to the place, in the hope of finding a rich seam. A little later, a band of Mexicans came across a gold vein near the Amargosa River bed, east of Death Valley, but the Pintes of the desert came along and killed every one of them. In 1871, Lieutenant Wheeler, on an exploring trip, ordered his guide to cross the valley on foot. The guide declared it was impossible; so the Lieutenant called two soldiers,

who, with fixed bayonets, compelled the man to lead the way. Within two hours, one of the soldiers staggered back to camp, hardly able to walk; the others were lost—they became insane, and strayed away to die. Not many years ago a Frenchman, named Isidore Daunet, with six companions, attempted to cross the valley on the way to Arizona. The party started, and before they realised their condition, their water-supply was gone. Half wild with their sufferings from thirst, they cut the throats of their pack animals, and drank the spouting blood. Daunet and one other man escaped with their lives; the rest perished. Two days afterwards, the Frenchman tied up his head in a white handkerchief, and put a bullet through his brain. Almost invariably the victims of the valley—save when they fall into the quicksands—go mad before they die. It is another illustration of the old saying: *Quem Deus vult perdere, prius dementat*. A prospector, named O'Brien, reached some coyote holes on the edge of one of the small dry lakes, with which the valley abounds. He found a little water which he drank eagerly; it only exaggerated his thirst. His brain gave way, and he began digging in the sands with his hands. His dead body was found some days later under a gorse bush, and the fingers of both his hands were seen to be worn to the bone, from unavailing attempts to dig for water. A curious delusion often takes possession of sufferers. The dreams of water become realities. They see at a little distance away green fields and bubbling streams, where others might find nothing but the unending succession of white hummocks of sand. More than one man, too, has been found stripped naked and walking about on the burning sand, with his clothing above his head—to keep it from getting wet! A borax company works just on the brink of the valley, and the surveyor attached to the staff said recently that it is impossible to go for an hour without water, without becoming a raving maniac, so intense is the heat. One man died from the heat whilst lying still inside his adobe house on the company's property. Another, while riding with a canteen in his hand on top of a load of borax, fell over and expired. He was so parched, so we are assured, that his head cracked open over the top.

The animal life of this strange quarter of the globe is, in many respects, unique. One of the greatest curiosities is the deadly 'side-winder' snake, which is not found outside the deserts. It is a little rattlesnake, about eighteen inches long, and flops about from side to side, instead of crawling like other reptiles. Its bite is fatal in three minutes. The gila monster, a poisonous lizard hardly less deadly, is also found there. Then there are rats with extraordinary ears, which bulge out at the side to an extent known in no other animals. There are 'kangaroo rats' and 'kangaroo mice,' which get over the ground with a succession of vigorous hops. Their hind-legs and tails are surprisingly long and powerful. Dr E. H. Merriam, of the Department of Agriculture, who led an exploring party into the neighbourhood three years ago, says they are not, in the true sense, either rats or mice, but belong to species quite

distinct. Another of the curious rodents of the valley is the scorpion mouse, which feeds on scorpions, and, on the whole, has a good time of it. Again, there are the grasshopper mice, with a strong taste for centipedes, and the pocket mice, with huge wallets outside their throats for the storage of provisions. During March and April, a species of gnat, which might beat a Jersey mosquito at his own game, appears on the scene, and stings both men and 'burros' to madness. And at night-time, all the year round, countless lizards, up to two feet long, squirm out of their holes; the rattlesnakes wriggle across the alkali crust; horned toads creep about; and scorpions and tarantulas of enormous size sharpen their claws, and hurtle around in search of prey.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

CHAPTER XIX.

AND now I have to relate the occurrence of a very surprising incident. It was not only surprising in the way it happened, accompanied by circumstances that have a kind of supernatural appearance, but also in the time when it happened. Had it been earlier, or had it been later, this history might never have been written. Had it never happened at all, what might have become of Isabel? And for myself, I might as well have jumped off my own quay into the flowing river for all the hope or joy of living that would have been left to me. The wonder of the thing is that it was not found out long before. A hundred times and more the place had been searched: an accident might have revealed the secret: a jar, a fall, might have thrown open the hiding-place: a casual cabinet-maker might have found it out had he looked in the right direction. But kindly fate left the discovery to me.

The room allotted to me for a bedroom was that in which old John Burnikel's bare and naked four-poster was standing. When I was first shown the room, it had no other furniture than the four-poster, and the old man's sea-chest. They had now clothed the forlorn bedstead, and put in certain chairs and things so as to make a habitable room of it. The window faced south, and as it was on the second floor, it looked over the boat-shed upon the river. Here I slept every night in the bed where the old Master Mariner died, quite untroubled by any thoughts about him or the long-lost diamonds, and unvisited by the ghost of their former owner.

It was in the beginning of August, when the nights are still short. Perhaps it was a hot night: perhaps there was more noise of passing steamers from the river than usual—the Silent Highway is generally much noisier than Cheap-side by night as well as by day; whatever the cause, I woke up, starting suddenly into wakefulness: it was early dawn, but the light was

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rapidly increasing. My blind was up; my curtains drawn; my window wide open. I lay lazily watching the sky in the south grow lighter—gray at first, and then suffused with some of the eastern glow—a tender, subdued glow, like the colour on Isabel's cheek, which so quickly comes and goes—the tell-tale glow. Perhaps had I not begun to think about Isabel I might have gone to sleep again, in which case this thing would not have happened.

The gray hues passed away; the rosy hues passed away; there remained the clear deep hue of early morning before the smoke begins, when the sky is sometimes like the sky of Africa for clearness and for depth; and when the river, with its bridges and its boats, all asleep in silence, save for the wish and wash of the ebb and flow, is an enchanted stream.

Presently I closed my eyes again. Contrary to reasonable expectation, I did not go to sleep. It was that kind of hopeless wakefulness which makes sleep past praying for—I insist upon this point on account of what followed, which was not a dream—for I was awake; but a kind of vision, and only remarkable because it coincided with the discovery.

Do not suppose that I attribute this vision to any supernatural interference. Nothing of the kind. Neither the ancient mariner, the master mariner, nor the unfortunate Nabob of whose existence I first learned in the vision, ever appeared to me, or afflicted me with terrors. I have never been in the least afraid of ghosts. Had old John Burnikel come to my bedside, I would have had the secret of the diamonds out of him before I let him go, as sure as my name is George Burnikel. But he never came. He made no sign. I think he must have forgotten in the other world all about his diamonds: his ghost never once appeared to me. Had it done so, I would have had the great secret, I say, out of him in no time. 'Ghost!' I should have said, 'where are those diamonds? Who stole them? What is the truth about them? If they were stolen and have long since been dispersed, let me know. If they still remain to be discovered, somewhere or other, tell me where they are. I adjure thee—I command thee—by all the charms and spells that you ghosts are fools enough to dread, tell me where those diamonds are.'

That is what I should have said. But the only man I know who ever claimed to have raised a ghost—and that was also the ghost of a sailor—told me that he was only too glad to let him go back again below, below, below; and that, though as brave as most, he did not dare to ask any questions. I don't believe a word of it. However, ghosts are scarce; perhaps I should have behaved in the same manner. And this I take it is the case with most; otherwise we should know more about certain things whose uncertainty is sometimes disagreeable. All you have to do is to raise your ghost, and not be afraid of him. There was no ghost, and yet the air seemed this morning full of the Burnikel legend. There was the sound of a ship slowly making her way up the river—a Hamburg or Norwegian steamer, perhaps: one is never allowed perfect calm at Wapping. I

lay on my back in the old wooden four-poster, which they had fitted with a spring mattress instead of a feather-bed, and I recalled the wonderful story: how the old man one night displayed his bag of precious stones, worth anything you please; how he told the cousins it would be theirs; how a day or two afterwards, he was found dying, and told them, collectively, that they knew where the bag was kept; how they did not know, but searched and could not find it, and accused each other, and fought and separated.

I lay on my back recalling this odd story, which was chiefly interesting because it was a story without an end.

Another interest it might have, if one were to consider how John Burnikel got those diamonds; because the old man's romance of the Great Mogul and the invitation to fill his pockets in the Royal Treasure vaults was clearly too ridiculous; it was so very plainly invented with intent to deceive.

Now the first thing that happened after this awaking was a vision. It was a very odd vision. To begin with, I was not asleep. To this day I cannot understand how this vision, of all others, came to me. One never dreams original plots of novels; quite new stories never come to any one; and this story, except for one little half-forgotten circumstance, was quite new. Some novelists have pretended that their plots come to them in dreams, but I do not believe it. Dreams and visions are erratic, incoherent, and unconnected things for the most part. That makes my vision all the more remarkable.

I suppose I must have dropped into some kind of bodily torpor. I am sure I was not asleep, because all through the business I knew that I was lying on the bed, although the action of the piece, so to speak, was elsewhere. However that may be, it is really useless to explain or account for a vision. The one that came to me was, so to speak, a magnified and embroidered piece of work, springing from something that Isabel had once told me. Why, I had quite forgotten it. She was talking about her people, who were no more illustrious in station than my own; and she informed me that once there was a strange man among them who had run away to sea, and come home again in rags, twenty years later, raving about a fortune he had lost in India. Nothing more than that. A very slight material of which to construct a vision. Yet it came, and as long as I live, I shall believe that the vision was somehow a revelation of the truth sent to me just before the great discovery.

It began by my stepping out of the house—but I knew all along that I was in the bed—and walking down the narrow lane leading out of the High Street to Wapping Old Stairs. There I found, sitting on the stairs, an elderly gentleman dressed in clothes extremely shabby. He wore a coat of brown cloth, he had worsted stockings, hat frayed and worn at the edge—quite a poor man he seemed to be. From his dress, it was evident that he belonged to the eighteenth century, which I like to consider as a picturesque period.

He sat upon the top step of Wapping Old

Stairs, and he looked across the river. And as he gazed, the tears ran down his face.

It is not often that one gets the chance of talking to a man of the eighteenth century, but it seemed not unnatural. I sat down beside him as if it were the most natural thing in the world.

'What, sir,' I asked timidly, 'is the cause of this grief?'

He sighed heavily. 'My diamonds!' he said. 'My diamonds!'

'What diamonds? I am a stranger to your time, worthy sir, and I know nothing of your diamonds.'

'What troubles me,' he said, 'is that I think I must have lost my soul in getting them together, in which case I have thrown away my soul for nothing.'

'Dear me, sir, this is serious indeed.'

'Yes, young man; they were amassed by scraping and grinding, and squeezing and skinning. Never were people ground down more miserably, and it was I who did it, in my master's service. In the service of the devil, I think. And now I have lost the diamonds as well. What have I got in exchange for my soul?'

I ought to have thought of John Burnikel at this point, but I did not.

'Tell me more about the diamonds,' I said.

'Once I was a Nabob,' he began, fetchingly sigh as deep as an artesian well.

'Really? A Nabob? I thought a Nabob had a carriage and four, and troops of servants.'

'Once I was a Nabob.' Then he stopped, and looked around him suspiciously. The watermen lay asleep in their boats. It was a Sunday afternoon in summer. The ships were moored in long lines down the river from London Bridge, which we could not see for the bend, down to the Lower Pool. 'Is there no one here but yourself?' he whispered.

'No one. And I belong to the next century.'

'So you do. And you can't lock me up in a madhouse, can you? Oh! It's dreadful to be in a madhouse when you are not mad: horrible: they knock you about: they starve you: they abuse you: they chain you up: when you are not mad at all. Young man, never, if you can possibly help it, lock up any one in a madhouse.'

I promised him that I would not.

'They put me in on account of these lost diamonds. They said I was mad.'

'What diamonds, then?'

'Sir, it relieves my grief to tell the cause. I was one of those unlucky youths who cannot remain at home and do what the others do. I had to run away when I was fourteen to prevent being apprenticed to some vile trade—saddlery, I believe. So I ran away and went to sea—and when we got to Calcutta, because the captain was a brute, and the mate was a brute, and the bo's'n was a brute, I ran away from the ship, and went up-country, and entered the service of a native Prince. And him I served for twenty years and more—served well—squeezed, and ground, and skinned his people for him. And I got rich in his service, for he gave me great presents. I told you—I

was once a Nabob. Great presents he gave me, though he was a devil.'

'Very good, so far.'

'When he let me go, I carried down to Calcutta all my treasure in jewels and gold pieces. I bought jewels of which I understood the value very well, with my money, and put them in a bag with what I had already—a long, narrow, canvas bag—and put the bag in a leathern belt, where it could not be seen. And then I took passage in a Homeward Bound, with all my fortune upon my person, worn night and day in that narrow leathern belt. Lots of people brought treasure home from India that way. It was thought a safe way.'

'Well?'

He sighed heavily. 'On the voyage,' he resumed, 'I believe soon after sailing, I was taken ill: it was brain fever, sunstroke, or something. When I came to myself again I was on shore—brought ashore and taken to Bedlam because I was still disordered in my wits with my fever—or my sunstroke.'

'Oh! You were taken to Bedlam.'

'I was taken to Bedlam, and kept there—I don't know how long. When they let me go, and I remembered things, the belt was gone. The belt with the diamonds was gone, I say!'

'Who took it?'

'I don't know. Some sailor on the ship, perhaps. The keepers at Bedlam, perhaps. So I went home to my own people who lived at Canterbury and were saddlers. And when I went home in rags they drove me out; and when I raved about my diamonds, they locked me up again in another madhouse.'

All this time I never thought of old John Burnikel at all.

'That was very unlucky. What was the name of the ship?' I asked him.

'I cannot remember. I have never been able to remember.'

'Or of the captain?'

'I cannot remember.'

'What is your own name? Can you remember that?'

'Samuel Dering.'

'Oh! Are you by any accident related to Captain Dering and Isabel, his daughter, both living in the year 1895?'

'They will be my great-grand-nephew and my great-great-grand-niece.'

'Then they ought to have the diamonds if they were found?'

'Certainly they ought. I give them to Isabel. Please tell her so.'

'And the name of the captain.' For just then I remembered the old sailor. 'Was it John Burnikel?'

'It was.' He sprang to his feet. 'Captain Burnikel it was. Where is he? Where is he?'

'Dead, my friend; dead for nearly ninety years. As dead as you yourself.'

He looked at me reproachfully, and the vision vanished. I was lying in the old man's bed, and gazing at the sky. It was an odd trick of the brain, more especially as I had never heard any hint or suggestion of the kind. But to this moment I have believed that I dreamed the truth, and that old John Burnikel simply cut the belt from the waist of a passenger,

gone mad for the time with sunstroke or some other cause; that the passenger recovered after landing, but could not remember the name of the ship or the captain, and that he was the great-grand-uncle of Isabel.

Nothing in the story at all, perhaps, except for the accident which followed.

My eyes fell upon the sea-chest. It was a large iron-bound trunk; the sea-chest of an officer, not a common sailor, who is only allowed, I believe, a sea-bag.

The more I looked at that chest, the more I thought about the unfortunate Nabob, turning all his fortune into precious stones, and tying them up in a canvas bag worn as a belt. The vision, I repeat, was so clear, the words were so plain, that I had not the least doubt about the truth of the thing. John Burnikel had grown rich suddenly by robbing a sick man of his fortune. No one suspected him; no one can trace gems unless they are very large indeed; no one thought that he possessed any precious stones till the last year or so of a very long life, and then he accounted for their possession by a cock-and-bull story. Had the injured man, this poor ruined Nabob, found him out, he could bring no charge against him, for he had no kind of proof. And then an irresistible desire seized me to search the chest once more on my own account. It had been ransacked, I knew, time after time, by Robert and his predecessors. Never mind, I must look for myself.

C I D E R.

CIDER is one of the most ancient beverages. The name is also ancient and curious: our English word, which appears as *cidre* and *sithere* in 14th-century writers, is by the best authorities believed to represent the Greek word *sikera*, used in the Septuagint to translate the Hebrew *shekar*, usually rendered in the Old Testament 'strong drink.' The word was, however, specifically used for the fermented juice of apples ere the name or the thing was used in England. The Romans certainly cultivated apples in England; and cider has been made and drunk here since that date, if not from earlier ages. It has not maintained its hold on popular taste, however, in competition with some other drinks. Beers and wines have driven it into the background, and it is now mainly confined to the great orchard districts of England. There has, it is true, been an attempt to promote it in favour lately; and the authors of the enterprise contend that it is far less alcoholic, and therefore far less injurious than any of the known intoxicating beverages; that it is finer in flavour than cheap champagnes or inferior Burgundies; that it is in itself wholesome, refreshing, and the possessor of certain curative properties; and that if it became the national beverage again, there would be far less drunkenness and intemperate addiction to alcoholic liquors, and a great improvement in the social tone of the people consequently. This may be a dream, and it may not; but while those interested are busily pushing cider before those who look for a wholesome stimulant, we may with some

profit regard it as drink of importance in itself, and also of great historical interest.

A half-forgotten poet has said:

Where'er the British spread
Triumphant banners, or their fame has reached,
Diffusive, to the utmost bounds of this
Wide universe, Silurian cider borne
Shall please all tastes, and triumph o'er the vine.

But this is rather reckless patriotism. As a fact, the finest cider is not made by the British grower, but in Normandy. They have in that province brought cider-making to perfection. The total produce every year there amounts to hundreds of millions of gallons; and it is made with the utmost care. To begin, they choose the site of the orchard with judgment, and see that the soil is of the type which apples love; and they are equally thoughtful in selecting the varieties of the apple most fit for cider. Indeed, for the very finest cider, their solicitude is so great that none but the second or third year's fruit of the trees is used; and when the process of fermentation is reached, nothing is left to chance. Chemists of great experience watch the changes in the liquor; and the skill with which the process is regulated is based on the knowledge gathered from long practice. The result is, that some Normandy cider is equal in delicacy and flavour to fine champagne, and many cheap champagnes are simply sophisticated cider.

This deception is very general. The great bulk of the cider made in Normandy goes to the champagne districts, and is used to make cheap champagne, and to form the body of other wines too. Port, it seems, can be made, and often is made of cider, the colour being imparted by logwood or red-beet juice, and the flavour by the addition in very nice proportions of the root of the rhatany. This, it is said, is an imitation so excellent that the flavour would deceive a good judge of port. It is quite certain that all the cider made in Normandy does not, by a very large proportion, go on the market as cider; and that it is sold in the guise of cheap wines, both white and red. Certainly, than the champagne cider of Normandy there is nothing more delicate and effervescent, unless it be the same product of California, when at its best.

But in England there are ciders of great fragrance and delicacy, and there is no reason, its advocates say, why cider of this quality should not be more frequently made. The industry seems to be confined to well-marked districts. Macaulay spoke of 'Worcester, the queen of the cider's land;' but he was quite wrong. Worcester, though much given to cider-drinking, is not nearly so important an orchard or cider-making centre as the next county of Hereford. They make capital cider in Norfolk; but the counties which make cider in large quantities and use it as the staple beverage of the people, are Hereford, part of Worcester, and Shropshire, Devon, Somerset, and the west generally. Even there, however, you find many classes of cider. The very worst is the rough, crude liquor, made as a harvest drink by the farmers themselves. This stuff, hard and coarse enough to rasp the throat like a file, is served out to the labourers in the harvest fields, and

they drink quarts of it in a day. It is just as disgusting to watch this stuff being made as to drink it. Intrude upon a Hereford farmer at such times, and you will see bruised, half-rotten windfalls shovelled into the mill, with all manner of dirt, and even of living things. In the mixture the component parts are unrecognisable; and all is juice that comes from the press there. It is not this cider, however, that the poets sing and benevolent men recommend as a national beverage. Nor even do they advocate the general sale of the 'thin, acid, harsh kinds of cider which have given the drink a bad reputation,' and are nevertheless still on sale at every wayside inn throughout the cider-lands. They want to produce cider from 'special varieties of the best vintage fruits,' and so to give the people at a far lower price the advantage of 'a high-class liquor which shall be capable of taking the place in this country of the light wines of Germany and France.'

The manufacture of cider is not a complicated process, though it must be conducted with great care and judgment if the best results are to be attained. It is true that the deterioration of English cider is said to be due chiefly to the persistence of the growers in using antiquated methods. But that does not mean that they require new or costly machinery; it is simply a bare statement of the fact that they ought to select the varieties with the greatest care, grow them in the most scientific way, and use for eating only those apples which are not good enough for cider. When this stage has been reached, the next part of the work is simple. The apples should be neither over-ripe nor green; they should be free from injury, just full-ripe, at that stage in which the sugar in the fruit is at its greatest quantity. They should be placed in a mill, which breaks them up and reduces them to a pulpy state; and this pulp is next put into a press and the juice squeezed out to the last drop. Then it is left for fermentation, a process on which much of the quality of the cider depends. It must proceed slowly, and must be closely watched all the time; it is really a process which can only be successfully conducted by those who have a scientific knowledge of the conditions and the changes going on. In the end, the cider is drawn off, and the finest qualities are bottled and may be regarded as pure wine.

It is claimed that this cider, when pure and well made, is not merely an extremely wholesome drink, but is also very helpful to those who suffer from certain complaints, such as gout and rheumatism. It is quite positively declared that cures of rheumatism by this beverage can be mentioned; and that cider drinkers are far less subject to either disease than those who quaff other compounds. The curative property is ascribed to the malic acid contained in the liquor. Cider does not, even at its strongest point, contain a large percentage of alcohol, and the makers contend that its qualities are more wholesome and less 'heady' than those of any other liquor consumed in England. But for those who object to take alcohol in any appreciable form it is still possible to

utilise the juice of the apple or pear. It has long been a complaint that very few temperance drinks are really palatable or refreshing; and it is said that by arresting the fermentation of cider at a given point, a liquor containing only about three per cent. of alcohol can be produced, which will still retain the wholesome flavour of the fruit, be both palatable and refreshing, and will have much less alcohol than is often found in drinks sold as 'non-alcoholic.' However this may be, there can be little doubt that cider is much more wholesome than spirits, than bad wines, and than heavy and muddling beers; and there is some reason to watch with interest the efforts of the Association which has been formed lately to bring it into more general use in these islands.

THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF JOHN PERCIVAL.

CHAPTER III.

WHEN he reviewed afterwards, in quietness, the bewildering impressions of that night, John said to himself that it was the attitude of Miss Wamphrey which struck him before he had seen her face, and before he knew who she was, and that she was the object of young Maxwell's devotion; but probably this was only an idea developed afterwards, when he had begun to think of her in the character of a mysterious creature with a secret, for, indeed, to nobody else did she appear anything but a pretty girl in her twenties, very nicely dressed, with a little air of having descended from superior heights of fashion upon those circles of Duntrum which felt themselves so exclusive. Marion had spent most of the season in Edinburgh: she had even been in London; and various other girls in the assembly had already noted several points in her attire as things that were doubtless 'to be worn,' since she had just come from these fountain-heads of fashion. But what John remarked, or thought he remarked, was that she stood as one might to whom there might possibly arise an occasion to fly, which was a quite absurd exaggeration of any possibility, even if he were right in his surmises; also, which perhaps was more likely in that hypothesis, that she looked as if she expected something to happen, and glanced up behind the fan, of which she made greater use than a rustic Scotch maiden was apt to do (which was one of the things that struck the other girls as probably a new development of fashion), or over the shoulder of the chaperon whom she followed like her shadow (which also was not a habit common among the young ladies of Duntrum), with a certain keen look of alarm, of expectance in her eyes. It happened that John saw her, after his eyes, as he thought, had been attracted to her by this peculiarity of attitude and look at a moment when she had dropped her fan to greet a friend, and before she perceived himself in the little crowd.

'Hallo!' he said to himself in the sudden surprise of recognition, and unaware he said it aloud.

'What's happened?' said Maxwell by his

side; 'do you see anybody you know? By the way,' he added, 'it is Marion Wamphrey; of course you must have met her in Edinburgh. I wonder I never thought of that before.'

'Which is Miss Wamphrey?' said John. He looked in the other direction that he might not betray himself, and then looked again to see that the girl had put up her fan, and that (as he thought) the something she was expecting had happened. She had seen him. Her eyes had taken a roundness which they had not before, the alarm of expectation had gone, and a sort of panic had come in its place. He saw her (or thought he saw her) obliterate herself behind the larger form of the lady with whom she was for a moment—then look out again over her shoulder, as if standing on tiptoe. Of course, she must have expected, John thought to himself, all that was happening or was about to happen. She must have known she would meet him. She must have been prepared to be recognised. She must be now at the height of a great crisis of mind, wound up to face it out, hoping that perhaps he might have been less quick of observation, less certain of recollection than she was.

'That's her,' said Maxwell, with a wave of his hand towards the group, 'playing keek-bo with somebody over Mrs Brydon's shoulder. Just like her saucy ways! You'll find Marion no country cousin, I can tell you, Percival. There's not one of your Edinburgh fine ladies more—Eh? think you have seen her before? I'll be bound you have seen her before! She's been spending the season, I tell you, in Edinburgh, and you that have your *entrées* everywhere'—

'Not so much as that,' said John, with modesty; 'and you must remember I have had all the fun out of this year'—

'Never mind, I am sure you must have met her. Come along, and compare your experiences. I think I'm a man of great magnanimity not to hold you off; but it's better to run the risk of trusting you,' he added, with a laugh, 'than to give you the attraction of the forbidden.'

Somehow, however, their progress was slow through the little crowd, quite a little crowd, John felt, to one accustomed to the Assembly Rooms of Edinburgh. But somehow, everybody seemed to get in the way between himself and this lady. Had there not been a whisper sent out through the friendly ranks: 'Oh, keep him off me! that man with his story about the stage-coach. I cannot abide these funny men with their stories.' Young Duntrum, which had admired John quite long enough, was delighted to hear that so popular a girl as Marion Wamphrey did not want to hear the story which all the others had held their breath at. It was a victory, after all, for Duntrum over the invader in their midst. And accordingly they circled round him, and called attention to a hundred insignificant things.

'Did you hear the meet was at the Four Elms to-morrow, Percival?' 'Man, do you know there's every prospect of a fine frost.' 'Percival, my sister has a word to say to you about the Philharmonic.' 'Percival, I'm say-

ing'— He had to stop again and again to respond to their appeals; while, on the other hand, his companion shuffled impatiently about, waiting, and grumbled: 'Come on, man, never mind, be done with your civilities. She will have given away every dance before we get near her,' Maxwell said. Finally, John found himself standing face to face with this strange heroine of his thoughts. He said to himself that, but for her own looks, he might have been shaken in his conviction that it was she. The face that he saw before him, with hair smooth as satin, and crowned with flowers, as was then the fashion, in the midst of the ball was difficult to associate with the ruffled aspect, the flush of excitement, the strange light in the eyes of the woman at the coach door. But she stood straight up to meet him, like one who is strongly set in her own defence, as if she were standing at the bar: and there was in her eyes a watchfulness, a preparedness, as of a man who keeps his arm ready to return a blow. Perhaps all this was merely in John's eyes. Maxwell seemed to see nothing unusual in the look or air of the girl whom he admired. The gay group around fluttered and jested. Nobody within sight or hearing had the slightest suspicion of anything in Marion Wamphrey that was not always there. She did not hold out her hand to him, welcoming the stranger as the other frank and kindly maidens would have done; but that was because Miss Marion was always a little high and mighty, and now and then put on airs, as one who had been out in the world and knew the fashion.

'You mustn't think anything of that,' Maxwell said afterwards; 'it is just her way. I like her to have a way of her own, not like all the rest,' said the young man in love. But John Percival was not satisfied that it was her way. She seemed to look at him in the eyes as if trying to cow him, as if on the faintest movement on his part she were ready to strike. And this on his part excited him, and made him anxious to strike.

'I think,' he said, 'that Miss Wamphrey and I have met before'—

'I told you so,' said Maxwell, 'I told you both so. I was certain you must have met before.'

If this ass had not broken in with his assurances about a thing he could know nothing whatever about, John felt sure she would have shown more consciousness than she did. As it was, her colour, he was sure, wavered a little; but she said, with a little burst of laughing surprise: 'Oh, how condescending of you to remember! I recollect well seeing you, Mr Percival. But it was only seeing you, not meeting; for you were at the grand end of the Assembly Rooms, among all the lady patronesses, and I was only at the foot of the room, and knew nobody.'

'There's one for you, Percival,' said Maxwell delightedly. Though John had, it was certain, had a great *succès* in Duntrum, they were all coming to think that it might do him good to be a little taken down.

'That is very hard upon me, especially as it was so much to my loss,' said John; and then he thought he would carry the war into

the enemy's country. 'But I confess,' he added, 'I remember nothing about the Assembly Rooms. I think we have met in other circumstances.'

She gave him a broad look from her fully opened eyes, with a faint elevation of the eyebrows.

'There I confess you have the advantage of me,' she said steadily, holding him with that look, 'as I, it appears, had of you on the former occasion.' Then, with the faintest turn of her head, too dignified to be called a toss, she withdrew this embarrassing look from him, with a wave towards Maxwell of the card attached to her fan. 'If you want any dances from me,' she said, 'it will be better not to lose any time.'

'You cruel Marion,' cried the young man, 'it is all filled up, every line.'

'You should not have been so late,' she said with a laugh, and they stood for a moment with their heads together, in the easy intimacy of having known each other all their lives. And then followed a little ball-room battle, while John stood, somewhat grim, looking on.

'I that was going to ask how many you would give me!' from him, with tender reproach: and 'There will always be the extras, you know,' from her.

'And it's easy to mistake about an extra—if you'll be good,' said Maxwell, in a lively whisper: and they laughed together over the card which he was manipulating. John was determined he would hold his ground. She was a very pretty girl, and she was in a state of suppressed excitement (or at least he thought so), which made her doubly interesting. And it was he who was the cause of her excitement. Whatever is the reason, it pleases a man, at least of John's age, to feel that he is the cause of a woman's emotion. He was not daunted by the *persiflage*, but waited calmly till the end of the discussion; then he said:

'Is there no hope, Miss Wamphrey, for me?'

'Oh, Mr Percival,' she said, turning round with an air of having forgotten him, which would have done no discredit to a great lady at a court ball: and then she shook her head. 'I am afraid no more than there would have been for me, at the Assembly Rooms, if I had aspired to dance with one of the stewards,' she said, laughing, 'but you can look for yourself.' 'Come, give him the last of the extras, Marion,' said Maxwell, delighted to exercise a little patronage.

'If you are not at home and fast asleep before that,' said Marion, raising her eyes quickly, with a dart, to John's face.

He felt it like a blow, but very carefully inscribed his name at the very bottom of her list, and retired with a bow of much dignity—at which, with secret wrath, he heard her laugh with Maxwell as he turned away. It was to be war then? She meant to turn him into ridicule before he could unmask her as the heroine of the strange adventure which everybody knew. John was very moody all the evening, and did not half fulfil the expectations of the merry country ladies, who thought it was the business of their partners to be amusing as well as to dance well. John fulfilled

the latter requirement, but then they all danced well at Duntrum. They did not know the waltz in those days. They danced pretty figures of country-dances and reels, and other cheerful things. It had never occurred to them that quadrilles were dull—they were the height of the fashion, and the different figures respected as almost a revelation. Nobody 'sat out,' and if perhaps the assembly was simple, and some of the dances a little old-fashioned, it was very gay.

It need not be said that in the state of mind in which he was, John stayed till the last moment, and presented himself to Miss Wamphrey just as she was following her chaperon to the door, holding together a dress which had been slightly damaged in the rapidity of a last reel. There was a glance of battle in his eyes as he came up to her, with a reminder that this was his dance, which kindled an immediate response in hers.

'I cannot stay another moment, May,' said the chaperon crossly. Marion shrugged her pretty shoulders, with a look which spoke volumes of repugnance, and reluctance, and scorn, and made John furious.

'I cannot break my word to this gentleman, if he insists upon it,' she said.

'Seeing I have held on all these hours, and not gone to sleep,' said John, with something savage in his tone, 'only for this.'

There was a last dreary quadrille being formed, and she gave her hand and allowed herself to be led to it, to fill up a side place. They stood side by side in silence for a moment, and then Marion said:

'It is very noble on your part, Mr Percival, to hold out so long. I am so sorry to have been the means of breaking your night's rest.'

'It is not the first time, Miss Wamphrey,' he said.

'Not the first time! This is too much of a compliment. We are not accustomed in the country to have such pretty things said to us.'

'There was nothing so far from my intention as saying a pretty thing,' said John.

'This is more and more tremendous, Mr Percival! It was an ugly thing, then, you meant to say?'

'What I meant,' said John, 'was to let you know that I have not forgotten our meeting, which has cost me many a thought.'

'Dear me,' said Marion, 'is this all because I said I knew nobody at *that* ball? Comfort yourself. I knew nobody grand like the lady patronesses: but I had plenty of partners, and there is no need to be remorseful, even if you have the most tender conscience, on account of me.'

'You know very well it is not that I am thinking of,' said John, in a low tone.

'Well, I should not have expected it to be. A young man like you, in the best society, is not likely to trouble himself about a country girl he doesn't know.'

'At all events, the other occasion was a very different matter,' he said.

'What other occasion? One would think there was some great mystery between us. If you will come down from these stilts, and tell me what you mean'—

'That is just what I am most anxious to do—if I could for a moment suppose you had forgotten it! It was rather a different thing from a meeting at a ball.'

'You had better wait a little,' she said sharply, 'it is our turn for this figure.'

And then they danced. I forget now what these figures were called. It was the one in which the lady on one side is led off by the gentleman on the other side, who advances to the abandoned partner with a lady in each hand. John was the man who had to stand and look on. She had recovered all her spirit, all her freshness, it appeared, and made of this innocent performance a parade of gaiety and grace. She came up to him and retired from him, holding the hand of the other with the most coquettish defiance, and swept him such a curtsy as she might have made to the king—deeper even, with mock deference and scorn, which was considered very amusing by all the lookers-on. 'You should have seen Marion dancing *L'Étè*' (or whatever it was) 'with the man from Edinburgh,' they all said afterwards. John had been 'too much made of' since his arrival and his adventure: it was delightful that he should thus be made to feel 'put back in his place' without any one being to blame. And John, I will not deny, felt the sting: but he was stimulated by it, not depressed. In the quiet of the interval that followed, while the others were dancing, he made his attack on more decided lines.

'Where,' he said—'I have always been very curious—did you hide all those dreadful things you had on? The hoods, and the handkerchiefs, and the veil.'

A spark flashed up into her eyes—was it possible there was a laugh in it that showed through both the affected wonder and the actual fear?

'What in the world do you mean?' she said; 'the handkerchiefs and the hoods and—have you gone mad, Mr Percival?'

'Not a bit,' said John, 'nor you either. We're two very sane people. How you flashed it off in a moment might be just a woman's skill—but not to drop it on the road, not to let it be found anywhere, that's what I have always admired; it shows you have great force, and it really looked, you'll forgive me for saying, as if you had done such a thing before.'

She turned round, swerving a little from his side. 'If you're exposed it's your own fault,' she cried hurriedly, and in a very low tone. 'I am afraid to dance with you any more.'

'Oh, you need not be afraid,' said John. 'I am not mad: and I will not publish it, not at least at this moment; but stand still, or I'll not answer for what I may do.'

She stood still, a thrill running through her; but even at that moment contrived to make her tremor invisible to the others, with glances towards him and elevations of her eyebrows, and little movements of her hands. She was no soft girl to be crushed by anything he would do, but a resolute woman meaning to fight every step, and with all the odds in her favour, well known and popular, whereas himself nobody knew.

'Perhaps this is not the best moment,' said John, 'but I thought I must warn you. I was

very much taken in, and you must have had your laugh at me: but I was awake to all the circumstances in the end.'

'It is a good thing,' she said, suddenly forgetting herself, 'that you are awake sometimes; for a better sleeper'—then she stopped, and a deep red flush covered her face—'dreamer of dreams,' she added quietly, 'I never heard of. Did you dream all this, Mr Percival, or is it a story got up out of a book?'

And then they danced again, extraordinary interruption to such an interview. John could not help, when he took her hand, giving it a fierce grip of hostility, almost unawares. He was brought to his senses when it was with equal fierceness and almost equal strength returned. She was not looking at him, but moving in the dance with a smile on her face. Many a close clasp of love has been given in such circumstances, but seldom one of actual defiance and ferocity. Her eyes, though they were not on him, blazed, the colour forsook her face, and its very paleness shone. She had perhaps never looked so beautiful in her life.

'Come away, Marion, come away,' said Mrs Brydon, 'I cannot wait a moment longer.'

'This is the last figure,' said Marion over her shoulder, and she danced it to the end, but quickly disengaged herself before the concluding galop, and, seizing her friend by the arm, hurried away. John did not follow to get their cloaks and carriage, as he ought to have done. There were plenty of attendants ready. He sat down, grim, in a corner to think it over, and could not be persuaded to join the young men's rear-supper, or any of the closing festivities of the night.

NEW TAXES AND OLD ONES.

By MALTUS QUESTELL HOLYOAKE.

Few persons regard the taxes with the equanimity of the poet Byron who sang:

I like the taxes—when they're not too many.

Many or few (and *when* have they been few?), they have always been unpopular, for taxation is a universal affliction. There is no human being in the world who is not taxed, or for whom taxation is not paid, in some form; for taxation, like disease, attacks us in many insidious guises—from the time we are 'infants crying in the night,' until the last grim ride to the cemetery. The connection between taxation and disease is greater than may be imagined. In a London asylum there is a patient suffering from disease of the brain, who is returned as 'insane from over-taxation.' Taxation, though generally regarded as a dull and uninteresting topic, is a matter of vital and cosmopolitan importance. About eighty-three per cent. of the imperial revenue in 1894-95 was derived from taxation—the rest being from posts and telegraphs, crown-lands, Suez Canal shares, &c. The revenue of 1895-96, over 100 millions sterling—the largest in our history, and somewhat exceeding requirements—has

caused the suggestion to be made that there might be some remission of certain taxes. A brief enumeration of a few of the local and imperial exactions in force in this 'land of the free,' will serve to show the fiscal network that environs us. There are inhabited house duties, income-tax, land-tax, probate duty, legacy duty, succession duty, estate duty, birth and death certificates, marriage licenses, licenses for certain businesses, and duties on certain manufactures. Locomotion is taxed—carriages, cabs, and omnibuses all requiring licenses, and even the trains pay a railway duty on first and second class passengers. In the matter of liquids, beer and spirits incur both duties and licenses—wine, tea, and coffee pay a customs duty, and for water there is the rate. Dried fruits are subject to customs dues. Licenses are required for the use of armorial bearings on carriages, plate, jewellery, and note-paper; for the sale of patent medicines; and keeping male servants—Susan in her neat cap and apron, however, is duty-free, 'for which relief, much thanks,' as Hamlet says. Dogs, little and big, we all know, are taxed. Tobacco is doubly taxed, there being a manufacturing duty, and a retail license. The vendors of jewellery containing a certain proportion of the precious metals, must be armed with a gold or silver plate license. One must not shoot game or sell it without special licenses, and to blaze away at the humble sparrow entails a gun tax. An endeavour to 'lighten our darkness,' involves the gas rate. Uncle who receives family plate or jewellery in pledge, has to be provided with both pawnbrokers' and plate certificates. The clergy are entitled to certain fees for the burial of their parishioners. When the burial is in a cemetery, the chaplain attached to it performs the service. After paying his salary, the established ministers collect the balance of the fees for themselves, thus levying a tax on every corpse in their parishes. Thus poor man is hemmed in on all sides with taxation. Birth, marriage, death, food, habitation—all make separate revenue demands upon him. Only the air he breathes is free (if contaminated), and the time may come when of even that some needy Government may declare:

We will capture e'en the wind-god,
And confine him in a cave;
And then, through our patent process,
We the atmosphere will save;
Thus we'll squeeze our little brother,
When he tries his lungs to fill,
Put a meter on his windpipe
And present our little bill.

When Mr Goschen was Chancellor of the Exchequer, he imposed a stamp duty on bonds, which in the city was known as the Goschen stamp. His successor at the Treasury, Sir William Harcourt, removed this duty; whereupon a city Chaucer commemorated the event in the following lines:

One merrie daye oure Chancellor
Passed into lawe ye notion,
That certayne Bondes be yearlie stamped
With an adhesive 'Goschen.'
Righte much vexation didde itte cause;
'Twas measure ille-assorted;
But gladness in ye citie reigns,
For now ye stamp's 'Harcourted.'

History reveals the existence of many peculiar taxes in bygone days. Duties on salt, candles, bread, meat, leather, bricks, soap, starch, paper, hats, windows, bottles, advertisements, corn, and sacramental certificates (in Scotland) helped at various times to replenish the finances of former sovereigns. Another tax of the past was one on buttons. The vacuous wight who 'hadn't got all his buttons,' was then fiscally a fortunate man. There is still in existence an ancient tax for the maintenance of the city militia; it is one halfpenny in the pound on the annual assessment, and is collected by the corporation of London; it was first levied in Charles I.'s reign.

In other climes various taxes, wise and unwise, are resorted to in order to provide revenue; and oil, matches, matrimony, bustles, greeting cards, musical instruments, eggs, cycles, placards, lotteries, betting, entertainments, and commercial travellers are some of the fish caught in the net of the tax collector. To meet the cost of constructing and maintaining their large harbours, the French Government extract a tax of two francs from all passengers entering their channel ports—that is, ordinary travellers. In Turkey a license tax is collected from foreign merchants trading there. The English Commissioners in Central Africa tax all males over fourteen years of age, six shillings per head, which has to be paid in money, or a month's work given; in some places six baskets of maize are received as an equivalent. In Portuguese Africa a hut tax is levied, and six shillings and eightpence (that well-known legal charge) pays taxes for a man and his family for one year. It has recently been resolved in France to tax all employers twenty francs for each person in their service wearing livery. A large number of prepared human skeletons are exported annually from Germany and France to America, on which the United States revenue authorities levy a heavy duty. The dealers in these gruesome articles recently petitioned against the protective taxation of these immigrant skeletons. From skeletons to angels is a natural transition. It appears that quantities of angels made on the Continent are exported to the land of the Stars and Stripes for the decoration of Christmas trees, and for school entertainments, and are subject to a duty of thirty-five per cent. Cork legs also come under the purview of the fiscal officials of the nation that rejoiced in a M'Kinley tariff; upon which a New York satirical journal wrote:

A foreigner man—Emanuel Stork,
Arrived one day at the Port of New York,
But he couldn't get in,
'Cause he hadn't the tin
For the tax on his leg, which was cork.

Mr Powderly, the head of the Knights of Labour organisation, is responsible for the following additional suggestive verses:

But if Mr Emanuel Stork
Had a sound leg instead of a cork,
He'd be sure to get in
Without any tin
To crowd some one else out of work.

This is a humorous expression of the sentiments which led to the lately made restrictions on immigration to the States. In the land of 'the merry Swiss boy,' tax stamps are sold to enable the poor to pay their taxes by instalments, and revenue obligations are gradually acquitted by the weekly purchase of a few twenty-five centime stamps. A new tax has been created in Russia on all money passing in and out of the country. The tax amounts to one copeck on every hundred roubles, but each traveller furnished with a passport for abroad will be allowed three thousand roubles with him, free of duty. Any amount in excess of this sum must be declared—the penalty of omission being the confiscation of one-fourth of the sum concealed. In Saxony there is a town of one thousand seven hundred and fifty inhabitants, in which persons who have not paid taxes for three years are not allowed to frequent public-houses, and landlords are liable to penalties for serving them. A list of the names of one hundred and sixteen people who have not paid taxes since 1891 is exhibited at the inns. The tax defaulters set an example of sobriety, anyhow, to their law-abiding brethren.

Many persons consider with regard to taxation, 'tis better to bear the ills we have, than fly to others we know not of,' and bearing in mind what a veritable Old Man of the Sea taxation is already upon the backs of householders, propositions for fresh taxation are naturally regarded with impatience, and the inventor of a new source of revenue is certain of universal disapproval. A great statesman, dead some years, held the opinion that the inventors of new taxes deserved that

Their names—their human names—to every eye
The climax of all scorn should hang on high,
Exalted o'er their less abhorr'd compeers—
And festering in the infamy of years.

Notwithstanding this dreadful condemnation, there are odious people prepared to run the risk of unpopularity. The present writer was one. In 1883 he suggested the imposition of a proportional stamp duty on tickets of admission to theatres, music halls, gate-money race meetings, betting rings, and enclosures. The *Daily News*, in commenting on the propensity to suggest that somebody or something shall be taxed as a trait in man's nature that has hitherto escaped the notice of the moralist, remarked with reference to the present writer: 'There is a gentleman who has actually established an office, with a staff of clerks, for the purpose of promulgating a scheme for augmenting the revenue by imposing a stamp duty on theatre tickets. He is, we believe, not a theatrical manager.' As a matter of fact, the present writer was a revenue official of many years' standing, and it was more in accord with the fitness of things that he should point out fresh modes of raising revenue, than is the case with the financial reformers who issue journals, send lecturers on tour, and employ collectors to obtain funds to advocate their schemes of taxation. There was nothing remarkable in his proposing a new duty—it was as natural as for a lawyer to propose an amendment in the law.

The number of new taxes emanating from the busy brains of embryo Chancellors of the Exchequer is legion. Propositions for the taxation of books, dinners, amateur actors, hunting, photographs, cats, short stories, cycles, pianos, immigrants, billiard tables, bachelors, clubs, mineral waters, organ grinders, titles, villa names, tennis grounds, statues, pictures, boots, chimneys, telegraphs, telephones, electric lights, church and chapel goers, second Christian names, letters to newspapers, have already been made. A tax on beauty is another suggestion. How glad some of us would be to be eligible to pay it! A license duty on marriage engagements, also proposed, would serve as a verification and registration of the step preliminary to matrimony. In Paris there are no private undertakers, burial being undertaken by the municipality. It has been proposed to levy a fresh tax on funerals by raising the existing charge for graves. As in that city of pleasure theatres are taxed, this may be considered as the 'from grave to gay' of taxation. A few years ago there was considerable discussion as to the propriety of establishing turnstiles, and levying entrance fees in the museums and places of historical interest in Paris. M. Lockroy, the then Minister of Public Instruction, disclaimed the principle of charging admission fees to places which are maintained by public taxes, and are therefore the property of the people; but admitted the probability of a charge being made for admission to the Palace of Versailles one day. In England the public are already thus taxed, admission fees being required on certain days to the Tower of London, and South Kensington Museum. The principle is also acted on by lordly owners of certain historical English castles, who check indiscriminate crowds by charging each visitor a shilling for admission; which amounts are, it is needless to say, handed over to local charities. It has been recently proposed by the French Government to tax operations on the Paris Bourse or Stock Exchange, a duty being levied on both the purchase and sale note, according to the amount of stock changing hands. It is expected to yield twelve million francs. A scheme was also submitted to M. Peytral, the French financial minister, to control outside stockbrokers. It proposes, virtually, their abolition; a loan to be issued to compensate them for their loss of business. A tax upon the profits of the authorised brokers remaining would be imposed to repay the loan. In France sixty-three per cent. of the revenue comes from indirect taxation, that on registration in connection with the changes of ownership of property being the most important.

In England a proposal has been made, 'that powers should be given to county councils to sanction the establishment in every locality of licensed betting-offices, and that a percentage be deducted from all transactions for the benefit of the deserving poor, or as a sinking fund for old age pensions.' It would be interesting to learn if the proposer would consider persons who had beggared themselves by betting as deserving poor. The fund for old age pensions is thoughtful, as the necessity for them would manifestly be increased if the

proposed offices were opened. The total of stakes run for by horses amounts to nearly half-a-million pounds. It is suggested, with more reason, that the revenue should appropriate ten per cent. of this sum. Lately, the English bookmakers have proposed to tax themselves by charging registration fees on those who betted in Tattersall's ring of twenty-five pounds a year, graduated down to three pounds a year on those who betted in the half-crown rings and outside, the money to be used to provide a special police staff for the protection of the betting public against welshers, talepitchers (whoever they may be), and men who make a living on the turf by surreptitious methods. A similar self-imposed tax, it appears, is in force in Australia. The financial committee of the French Chamber of Deputies have been considering whether they should check the trade extension of large shops, like the Bon Marché, by taxing every different branch of business in colossal firms. The shop assistants petitioned against the change, considering it would cause a contraction of expenses which would injuriously affect them without benefiting the small shopkeepers. A tax has been proposed on the wooden fences and dead walls which disfigure many estates, and shut out from the public view green fields, picturesque woods, and pleasant parks, spoiling Nature's landscape. The taxation of land values, ground rents, and betterment as a source of revenue is being constantly urged upon the Government. A plan to rearrange the wine, spirit, and beer dealers' licenses on a *pro rata* scale, as in the case of publicans' licenses, has been formulated. A recent proposal of a fiscal nature is one to tax French *rentes* as a concession to socialism. The French budget estimates of 1896 contain about 48 million francs, raised on account of carriages, horses, &c., including 10 million francs from a proposed tax on servants. Mr Goschen's proposition, when in office, to re-impose the tax on horses which was in existence some twenty-six years ago, was the occasion of the following epigram:

'A tax upon horses,' said Goschen, 'I hope
Will meet with the cordial support of all classes.'
Perhaps so—but think how much wider his scope,
If he only would put a small duty on asses.

'Ought the inventor of a new tax to be rewarded?' is a question that has been asked in the press. It will be interesting and instructive to those with a propensity to make tax suggestions if by way of a conclusion the view taken by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury is given. When in 1888 Mr Goschen imposed the brokers' tax, a city gentleman held that he was entitled to some remuneration out of the Exchequer for having suggested it. 'My Lords,' it was stated, declined to entertain the demand for the following reasons—that they did not admit that the suggestion made by the applicant was the same as the tax imposed, that similar suggestions were received from many other quarters, and that they refused to admit the principle that any citizen suggesting a new mode of raising the national revenue had any claim whatever

to a pecuniary reward payable out of the national funds. The tax inventor in question should have lived in the times when prizes were offered for the best suggestions for new taxes, 'the good old days when George the Third was King.'

THE RESIDUARY LEGATEE.

By WILLIAM PIGOTT.

THE day that old Major Dalrymple was buried seemed singularly in keeping with so solemn an event. The light never advanced beyond a semi-obscurity, and the air was heavy with the smell of rotting leaves. There was a wild look over the country in the morning, bleak fields, long uncompromising hedgerows, gaunt trees dropping softly and silently the last of their quota to the decaying vegetation in the dikes. Towards evening, when the funeral was over, the darkness fell quickly, and with a damp chill that made the blacksmith's shop in the village, with its glowing forge, seem a strangely inviting and comfortable place.

In the library at the Hall, a fire was burning, and it was needed. It shone brightly and continually upon the cross-barred ceiling, and glinted, as it flickered and fell, now upon the glass window of a bookcase, now upon an old Dresden ornament, now upon the huge brass inkstand which the major had used—and no one else had dared to use—until a month before his death.

It lighted the faces of two people, who were seated in front of it, a girl and a young man. They were dressed in deep mourning, as was fitting, for one was the ward and the other the nephew of the deceased, and their faces looked white in the gloom. He was holding her hand, which betokened an understanding; and the subject of their converse was, not unnaturally, the disposition of the property of the late major.

'Perhaps he never made one?' said the girl. The man was not disposed to accept this view. 'He would make one,' he said, a little bitterly, 'if it were only to cut me out.'

There was a moment's pause, and then the girl crept closer to him. 'I can never make up to you, Harold,' she whispered, 'for all you have lost through me.'

Her lover slipped his arm round her waist. 'I feel wonderfully content to let you try,' he declared.

'You see,' the girl said thoughtfully, her eyes fixed upon the glowing coals, 'you had such a splendid chance.'

'I was hoping,' said Harold, 'that I had it still.'

'Don't be silly. You know what I mean. The major was a rich old man, with no living relations in the world but his two nephews, Gilbert Macgregor and you. That was your chance.'

'And also Gilbert's chance,' said the young man pertinently.

'It was a chance for both of you. For a

long time you were on your trial. Everybody knew it; you knew it yourselves. Most people said Gilbert Macgregor would be chosen.' She paused, and concluded, naïvely: 'I said Harold Cecil.'

She received what such a remark naturally provoked; and after a time Harold had leisure to make an observation. 'And you were right,' he said, 'and all the rest of the people were quite wrong.'

The girl smoothed her hair, and continued her retrospect. 'Yes, I was right. The major asked you to come and live with him, which was very kind of him, and of course you came. He treated you as his son; everything here was put at your disposal; you had all you could possibly wish for while he lived, and the assurance of being his heir when he died. To all this there was attached a single condition—not expressly stated, perhaps, but understood—and you broke it.'

'When a condition is an impossibility,' observed Cecil, with a show of reason, 'a man is bound to break it.'

'Oh, but this was not an impossibility. It was really a very simple thing: you were not to fall in love with his ward. And—and you'—

'Well?' said Harold calmly.

'And you did,' she snapped, fiercely returning his gaze.

Her eyes were sparkling in the firelight, and it gleamed upon her skin, which was soft and white. Harold felt that an attempt to contravene her statement must eventually bring him to disaster; so he confirmed it at once, which was satisfactory to them both. 'In consequence,' he remarked, 'I was dismissed with ignominy, and Gilbert installed, to try his hand at the impossibility.'

'Which,' said the girl paradoxically, 'he proved to be no impossibility.'

Cecil was obviously sceptical. 'Three months was not long to hold out,' he observed. 'And, besides, there was the question of expediency. I wonder,' he added reflectively, 'why the major was so dead against either of us marrying you?'

The girl laughed softly. 'Do you know who I am?' she asked.

The question seemed to amuse Cecil. 'I know that you are the dearest little woman in all the world,' was his very natural reply, 'and that you were my uncle's ward, and that your name is Mary Johnson; and if you ask me if I want to know any more, I can tell you that I do not.'

'You see, you have taken me on very slender credentials,' said the girl, smiling. 'Now, how do you remember the major?'

'He was a dear old man,' replied Harold; 'a bit touchy, perhaps, and impulsive, but a dear old man, and as proud of his blood as the combined peerage.'

'There never was an Eccles,'" observed Mary inconsequently.

'So I have heard,' replied Cecil. 'But at present I can't say that I care particularly whether there was or was not.'

'Well, there never was a Johnson, either. My father was a self-made man. My grand-

father worked as a common labourer. So my blood is of the ordinary colour. It would never have done for the inheritor of the Dalrymple estates to marry a person with blood of the ordinary colour.' She looked intensely serious as she finished, and Cecil felt vaguely uncomfortable.

'You would not chaff me out of marrying you,' he remarked, 'even if I were the inheritor of the estates.'

'Perhaps you are? The will has not been read.'

'That is a mere formality.'

'He turned you out; but he may not have altered his will.'

'Oh, surely'—

'Three months is not a long time, Harold.'

'Quite long enough,' said Harold.

'Supposing it were a will in your favour with a condition?'

'It will not be. He saw me break a condition in his lifetime.'

Mary was not disposed to argue. 'We shall see,' she said.

'I suppose we shall,' Cecil agreed, 'but I wonder when? The lawyer should have been here for the funeral. That was at two o'clock.' He took out his watch. 'It is now five, and there is no sign of him.'

The door softly opened, and softly closed. In the interval, a man had entered the room. He was thin, clean-shaven, and jaunty in manner. There was the suggestion about him of the trimmed and studied humorist, chastened by a solemnity fitting the mournful occasion. His dress was properly funereal. In his left hand he carried a bunch of keys. Obviously, he was a man of culture, but one couldn't avoid the feeling that he would have made an excellent groom.

His eyebrows lifted slightly when he saw the couple by the fireplace; then he tripped up to them. 'You have found a pleasant fire,' he pattered. 'With our spirits at so low an ebb, we find a fire distinctly comforting.'

'We were talking about this lawyer, Gilbert,' said Harold. 'I suppose the old gentleman hasn't put in an appearance yet?'

'I am disturbed to say no. By the delay, we are seriously incommoded. It brings us to a standstill. It brings us to a palpable halt.'

'I suppose it does,' said Harold. 'But the point is, we want him to play propriety. I don't relish the idea of turning out to-night, eh?'

Gilbert was balancing himself on his toes, with a perpetual up and down motion that suggested a wire framework. 'You touch on a delicate point,' he tittered. 'The position is assuredly embarrassing—he, he. I earnestly trust the good man will arrive.'

'I think,' said Harold, 'I will go and make some inquiries at the stables.' So saying, he rose from his seat and went out of the room, leaving his *fiancée* and his cousin together; which, had he thought about the matter at all, he might have considered was not altogether a wise thing to do.

Mary rose as the door closed behind him. Her lips had tightened, her bearing had become more assertive. She looked for a moment

at the keys which Gilbert carried in his hand; then raised her eyes to his face. 'You came here for a purpose,' she said.

Gilbert hooked the split-ring to his little finger, and lightly jangled the keys. 'You allude to these little articles,' he said pleasantly. 'They are my uncle's keys, and your remark—as your remarks always are—is distinctly pertinent. I thought it best,' he babbled on, 'even in the absence of the family adviser, to go cursorily through the papers, to make a preliminary investigation, to take a dip at the brink—so to speak—in preparation for the plunge it will be necessary to make later on *in mediis res*. The office is a painful one, but it seemed to fall naturally to me, as a man of business, while Harold—I say it in all goodwill—Harold is a man of pleasure.'

Mary heard him through with some impatience. 'I suppose,' she suggested, 'you mean you are going to look for the will?'

'It is possible,' he said airily, 'that I may come across it—it is possible.'

He waved his hand, and set himself to walk—or, rather, to bounce—up and down the room. To a person who knew Gilbert Macgregor, this was a sure indication that he was about to say something which he considered important. Mary, therefore, moved swiftly and silently in the direction of the door.

'You will not go,' cried Gilbert, steadying his antics, 'I entreat you?' There was no help for it. So she stayed.

'It has been my privilege, Miss Johnson,' he began, 'to live for three months beneath the same roof with you. Will you allow me to assure you that it is impossible for a man to remain that length of time in your immediate propinquity, and not become, as it were, your slave.' As he warmed to his work, he jerked off again on his jaunting parade. 'If I have appeared to you heedless, inattentive, perhaps cold, believe me it was only that I feared to presume. I was overcome with emotions, but I hesitated from the dread of misconstruction. You enjoy, as I knew, a considerable property; which, I was distressed to think, might be deemed an attraction to a man of slender means. With the death of my revered uncle, that fear may be laid aside. I cannot doubt that I am in a position which will render the sincerity of my motives no longer open to suspicion. I come before you as a supplicant. As such, I would entreat of your bounty no more than a morsel of grace—a sign that my suit has been heard and has not displeased. If I have failed to offend, I am satisfied. Miss Johnson, I tremble.'

As he uttered the concluding words, he twitched himself to a standstill, facing the girl. Her colour had gradually risen during this oration, the muscles round her mouth had hardened, her face had assumed an expression of indignation.

'You are silent,' piped Gilbert. 'I have presumed. Forget it.'

'I will not forget it,' cried the girl, drawing herself up, and facing him boldly. 'You choose to affect ignorance, but you know that I am engaged to your cousin, and your proposal is an insult. As to your pretended

scruples, your behaviour was not actuated by any such delicate motives as you have the effrontery to suggest. You knew that to make any advances in my guardian's lifetime was to court his displeasure, and lose your chance of the money you coveted beyond everything. So you waited till his death, and now come to me before the sods are laid upon his grave. She whipped her skirts away from him, and with her head very much out of the perpendicular, walked majestically to the door. She opened it, and turned to throw a final shaft: 'You take it for granted that the money is yours; but remember—the will has not been read.' Then the door closed behind her with a snap.

By the girl's tirade Gilbert was not extensively disturbed. He was able to believe that he had suffered an undeserved imputation, and considered himself to be disillusioned. But her concluding words rankled. Was it possible that the major had taken his ward into his confidence? Did she know of the existence of a will unfavourable to himself?

As the possibility presented itself, a spasm of apprehension passed through him. To inherit the major's wealth was a matter of enormous import to Gilbert Macgregor. He had staked heavily on the expectation of it, and to lose the inheritance meant ruin and loss of honour. Though his mind rebelled against placing any significance upon the girl's words, they had taken root in his brain and increased his anxiety to get speedily forward with the work of finding the will.

He locked the door, pulled the heavy curtains across the window, and lighted the lamp which stood upon a small table by the side of the major's desk. The room was oblong. The whole of one side and end was lined with cases and shelves filled with books. In the middle of the opposite side stood the fireplace: the great oriel window broke out from the remaining end. An old oak cabinet of interesting workmanship stood in the niche between the fireplace and window; the space in the corner being filled by an iron safe. The corresponding niche between the fireplace and door was occupied by a bureau, with blue china ranged upon the ledges above it. The major's desk stood in the centre of the room, facing the bookshelves. Tables and chairs completed the furniture.

The most likely place for a valuable document to be kept in was obviously the safe. It was accordingly to this that Gilbert first directed his attention. He found the key, and succeeded in swinging open the heavy door without difficulty. There were five shelves in the interior, each bulging with documents, title-deeds carefully tied up in brown paper, insurance policies, stock and share certificates, miscellaneous papers all valuable to the owner, but of little account to anybody else. He took them out and twice went through them carefully. There was no sign of the will. Considerably disgusted, he returned them to their shelves, and snapped the door back in its place.

He turned from the safe to the cabinet which stood beside it. It was composed of four cupboards—two small ones at the top, two

larger ones at the bottom—with a long, shallow drawer between them. He opened one of the upper cupboards. It contained innumerable fragments of broken china—pieces of old Sevres tea-cups, the broken remnants of a beautiful Satsuma bowl, a valuable blue Hawthorne vase in several sections—all, evidently, gems from the major's collection, which had proved their perishable nature, and been set in a safe place with a view to renovation. Under ordinary circumstances, Gilbert might have spent some time in examining these interesting fragments; but now he merely gave a grunt of dissatisfaction, closed the cupboard door, and opened its fellow. The contents were of a widely different order. There were theatre programmes for fifteen consecutive years, newspaper cuttings of varying dates, ranging over an even greater length of time, and some old pamphlets and small dun-coloured volumes, which the major, no doubt, had enjoyed in his youth, but which in his mature years he had judged it wiser to keep under lock and key.

Gilbert closed the cupboard and savagely dragged open the drawer beneath it. Almost the first object that his glance rested upon was the will. He took it out with fingers that perceptibly shook, opened it, and pressed out the folds. The major directed the payment of his just debts—a superfluous clause which lawyers, being paid by the folio, think it best to insert—and left several legacies to old retainers and friends, and five hundred pounds to his ward. These preliminaries Gilbert merely skimmed over: he was interested in nothing but the residuary devise. When he reached it, the words swam before him in a mist, and he was forced to set the will down while he gained some control over his nerves. Presently he raised it again. The words had steadied themselves, and he read them: *All the rest, residue and remainder of my real and personal property, whatsoever and wheresoever, I give, devise, and bequeath to my nephew, Harold Cecil, in fee-simple, for his own absolute use and benefit.*

Gilbert's face had become as white as the paper he held in his hand. The blow had fallen so heavily that it left him for a time without the power to grapple with the facts. He was simply crushed, and could not rally. There was a cloud on his brain which would admit nothing but a dull sense of the impossibility of the proposition that, in spite of his care, in spite of the assurances he had received from his uncle, he was left to face ruin and dishonour.

This state of mind could not last long. He was naturally a man of energy and resource, and under no circumstances was it possible for his brain to remain long inactive. He closed and opened his eyes several times, like a man trying to accustom himself to a strong light, emptied his lungs with a dull, whistling sound, and once more set himself to study the offending clause. It was a singularly lucid and thorough one: no man in his senses could conceivably entertain any doubt as to its meaning: had he had the drafting of it himself, he felt he could not have improved upon it, except in the particular of the name. He stared at that until the letters assumed dis-

trressing proportions. They spelt 'Harold Cecil,' and by no ingenuity could he make them spell 'Gilbert Macgregor.'

The date of the will was the 15th August 1892. That was some months before Cecil had received his dismissal. Gilbert's spirits revived as he realised this. There would be a later will, by which the one in his hand would be made void. But almost as the possibility presented itself, he was forced to admit that it was only a possibility. The major had been an orderly man, whom he had heard more than once condemn the practice of accumulating superfluous papers. If this will were valueless, why had it not been destroyed? Why was it kept among his uncle's counterfoils and magisterial documents in the cabinet drawer?

His cogitations had advanced to this point, when he detected the sound of carriage wheels on the road. He listened, and heard them turn in at the gates and crunch upon the gravel in the drive. So the solicitor was coming at last! In a moment, his mind had grasped the salient features of that event, as they affected himself. After the man of business had entered the house he must stand or fall by the slender chance of a later will. Until he came he had it in his power to make sure of half the estate. His nerves were in a deplorable condition. A little matter was awaiting his attention, and he hesitated. The sound of the wheels on the drive grew louder and seemed to deafen him. With an oath, he crushed the will on to the fire, and the flames caught and lapped round it.

He held it in its place with the poker, till it turned to black ashes and dropped away. Then he made a few slight readjustments in his dress, and tripped out into the hall. He opened the front door; but the trap proved to contain no more interesting occupant than the groom who was driving.

'Another futile journey, James?' said Gilbert affably.

'Yes, sir,' replied the man. 'There's been a bit of a haccident, sir. Only just got word. Main line's blocked, and London passengers won't be in for another hour, they say.'

He drove off in the direction of the stables, and Gilbert skipped back into the house. He returned to the library, and sat down at the major's desk. The false alarm had shaken him, and he sat for some moments motionless, with his head between his hands. On reflection, he was not inclined to regret the interruption. At the worst, he would now share the estate with his cousin under an intestacy; and there still remained the chance of a later will which would give him the whole.

The desk was fitted with a line of drawers down each side, and Gilbert, continuing his search in a somewhat desultory way, opened the top one on the right. It held writing-paper and envelopes. The second was half filled with unpaid bills. He pulled at the third, but it proved to be locked. The first key that he tried overcame the difficulty, and he drew the drawer open. It contained a miscellaneous collection of papers, arranged in an orderly way. There were several bundles of tradesmen's receipts, waiting for the file,

the major's bank books, and various printed forms, relating for the most part to the transfer of stock. But Gilbert had no inducement to dip deeply into the contents of this drawer; for a document, lying well to the front, at once commanded his attention. It was a sheet of foolscap, neatly folded, and endorsed by the major's own hand:

Codicil to my will of the 15th day of August 1892.

Had it been a new will he would have pounced upon it with alacrity. Being a codicil, he drew it out slowly, and with a certain misgiving. He had never thought of a codicil. It was only a few lines long, and manifestly contrived without legal assistance. For so small a document it was astonishingly sweeping: *This is a codicil to my will of the 15th August 1892. I direct that wherever the name of my nephew, Harold Cecil, occurs in my said will, the name of my nephew, Gilbert Macgregor, be read in its place, and that my said will be given effect to as though the name Gilbert Macgregor had been originally inserted therein, and not the name Harold Cecil.* Then followed the signature and attestation.

A person of duller wits might have experienced a momentary satisfaction at reading this. The mortification of Gilbert Macgregor was instant and complete. He realised that the codicil was so worded that without the will it was useless; that, indeed, it was worse than useless: that it was a menace; for it showed the existence of a will which his every interest demanded should now be kept secret. He had set a crime upon his conscience; and the net result was to deprive him of half his inheritance. The paper dropped limply from his hands, and he sat staring with hopeless eyes upon the long lines of books which fronted him.

Presently he roused himself, walked across to the fire, and dropped the tell-tale codicil upon it. He watched it till the ashes broke; then moodily returned to his seat, sank his head upon the desk, and so remained.

The lamp was burning low, and it is possible that he slept. He heard a coal fall in the grate, the smothered tones of some clock in the house striking the hour, and without, as it seemed, an appreciable interval, the sound of voices near him. He partly raised his head and saw two people standing at the farther end of the room: one was his cousin; the other, a white-haired old gentleman, whom he recognised as the family adviser.

'I think, Mr Cecil,' the latter was remarking, 'that it will be convenient to proceed to business at once. I have the will in my bag.'

Gilbert sat up with a gasp. A new will, after all? He should have known that so slender a document as the codicil could only be meant as a safeguard. But now his nerves played him false! He realised that it behoved him, as the person chiefly interested, to rise and greet the solicitor, to be cordial though chastened, to show him such attention as might set him at his ease. He saw Cecil performing the office, and performing it, as he considered, indifferently; yet his own attempt got no

further than a bow. The lawyer returned it solemnly, and dipped his hands into a small black bag.

'By my advice,' he proceeded, turning over his papers, 'the will was executed in duplicate. Major Dalrymple took one copy; the other I retained'—he found the document he was looking for—'and have here.' He spread out the will, coughed solemnly, and continued: 'The document is somewhat lengthy, and it will be sufficient, I think, for our present purpose, to touch briefly upon its main features. There are various legacies, both pecuniary and specific, to friends, old servants and retainers. Some three or four thousand pounds is distributed in this way. There is a bequest of £500 to his ward, Mary Johnson. The residuary devise is in favour of his nephew, Harold Cecil.' The old man held out his hand to Harold. 'Will you permit me to congratulate you?'

There was some commotion at the desk. Gilbert had risen, and stood with pallid cheeks and starting eyes, his jaw moving helplessly. Obviously he was trying to speak, but could not form the words. He stretched out an unsteady arm and pointed at the solicitor. Some inarticulate mutterings came from his throat, and then the words, but hoarsely: 'The codicil, sir! You have not read the codicil.'

The old lawyer was taken aback. 'I have no knowledge of any such document,' he replied shortly. 'Major Dalrymple did, it is true, intimate at one time a desire to execute something in the nature of a revocation, but I was not favoured with his instructions.'

There was a pause. Gilbert's face was working convulsively. He could have given fifty thousand pounds for the sheet of foolscap he had dropped so sullenly into the fire, and have made a big profit on the transaction. He had fancied himself destroying a troublesome paper: in reality he was burning his inheritance, his honour, perhaps his life. Bah! there was an irony in it that galled him beyond endurance! With a loud cry, he seized the heavy brass inkstand on the desk, swung it over his head, and hurled it at the unoffending lawyer. The old man avoided it with some agility, and it crashed through the glass front of a book-case. At the same moment, the door clanged; and the air was purer for the absence of a criminal.

THE ANEMONE.

'One frail and fair anemone.'—SHELLEY.

Spring smiles, and sudden silver songs arise;
Earth dons her ever fresh green garb in glee.
Note, 'neath the sun's gay glance, the soft surprise
Of innocent young waves. But o'er the lea
To-morrow Boreas rushes. An oak-tree
Defies him: then he harries all the way—
The first anemone crushed carelessly.
His loved young brother, Zephyr, comes next day,
And, wistful wailing, seeks his little playmate gay.

E. H.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 647.—VOL. XIII.

SATURDAY, MAY 23, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

THE LAND OF DATES.

Most people nowadays know the dates of Tafilet, but few people know much of the country from whence they come, for of the many travellers who have told us something of the land of the Moors, only one or two have penetrated beyond the Atlas Mountains. For this reason, there is a special and peculiar interest in the narrative which Mr Walter B. Harris has recently published of a memorable journey.* When Mr Harris (who is well acquainted with and has written much already about Morocco and Arabia) made up his mind to go to Tafilet, towards the end of 1893, it was because he heard that the (late) Sultan of Morocco was going there with an immense retinue, to visit the tomb of his ancestors. But the Sultan would have no Europeans in his train—except his French medical adviser, and his Scotch military adviser, 'Kaid' MacLean—so that Mr Harris had to make a route of his own. The Sultan went right through Morocco from Fez, and over the Atlas Mountains to the Sahara, so Mr Harris took a steamer from Tangier down the coast to Saffi, and there engaging servants and mules, marched inland for a hundred miles, in the first place, through a not particularly interesting country to Marakesh, the southern capital of Morocco, and sometimes called Morocco City. It lies almost in the shadow of the Atlas Mountains, whose snow-capped peaks, rising to a height of thirteen and fourteen thousand feet, form a wonderful background to a picture composed otherwise of tropical vegetation and Moorish minarets. Marakesh is almost hidden in a forest of palms, and looks wonderfully picturesque from the outside, but internally it is in a fearful state of dilapidation and squalor. The streets are narrow, though wider than those of Fez, and the houses are for the most part small one-

storeyed buildings with the usual inner open court. They are built of mud, bricks, and concrete, and there are only two stone buildings in the place. The bazaars, however, are large and well supplied, where all manner of goods are on sale, from Manchester cottons to Moorish daggers and brass-work.

It was necessary, when preparations were all complete, to get out of the city with secrecy as to the object of his journey, so Mr Harris adopted the Moorish dress, and passed as a devout Islamite on his way to visit some sacred tomb in the interior. Here is his general impression of Marakesh: 'Briefly, it presents a maze of yellow streets leading here between the crumbling walls of tottering houses; there, through narrow, dimly lit bazaars with their tiny boxlike shops; and here, again, amongst the high, white walls of the residences of the richer class. Then out into great open dusty spaces, surrounded by half-ruined mosques with tiled minarets, and gardens, above the walls of which appear the tops of palms, olive, and orange trees, and the straight stems of glowing cypresses. Then, perhaps, one turns a corner and comes face to face with a drinking-fountain of exquisite tilework and carved wood, to stumble, as one gazes at it, into a manure heap or a hole in the road, broken in the roof of some aqueduct. And beyond, the wonderful range of white snow-peaks, the silent majesty of the Atlas Mountains.'

Before the ascent of these mountains began, however, there was a wide and dreary plain to be traversed, the soil of which had been turned into light yellow by the heat of the summer. This passed, the work of climbing becomes arduous, and by-and-by one passes from great heat into extreme cold. At times the track goes along the face of a precipice, anon through deep rocky defiles, and again across rushing streams. There is no game to speak of among these mountains, and often no vegetation, beyond the northern slopes which are exposed to the winter rainfalls. After leaving the area of

* *Tafilet: The Narrative of a Journey of Exploration in the Atlas Mountains and the Oases of the North-west Sahara*, by Walter B. Harris. (Blackwood.)

vegetation, food becomes scarce, and our travellers subsisted for days on green tea, boiled turnips, and dry figs, with occasionally a handful of walnuts—surely poor fare for such a toilsome journey. Both the toils and the diet told on Mr Harris, who was seriously ill when he did reach Taflet, and would have died (for all the Sultan cared) but for the kindness of some friendly soldiers, and the attention of Dr Linares and Kaid MacLean.

The scenery of the Atlas is wonderfully grand. On the northern slopes are fine-wooded valleys, rich in olive and other fruit trees, but the south stretches away—a dreary waste of stone and shale, presenting no feature of beauty beyond its gloomy grandeur. This is because of the desert winds which dry up the soil on the south side, and then rushing up to the summits are transformed by the change of temperature into clouds which fall in heavy showers on the other side. All the principal rivers of Morocco, save one, rise in the Atlas Mountains, and the inhabitants are Berbers.

When one descends the further side of the mountains, the great plains have to be crossed, and part of the route which Mr Harris followed had never before been traversed by European. A vast sandy tract—a strip of the desert—had to be crossed, and over the sandy soil strewn with small black stones the party had to trudge often forty miles a day, to reach some oasis or water hole. One of the most interesting of these resting places is Dads, where Mr Harris tarried for some days enjoying the hospitality of the Shereef; but we must hasten on to Taflet—although it should be noted that while at Dads Mr Harris found some remarkable caves and a curious ruin, which he proposes to return some day to explore.

At length the last oasis was reached, and 'issuing suddenly upon the great waste of sand, a strange but welcome sight met our eyes. Stretching away for a couple of miles along the edge of the desert, white against white hills, the whole dancing and shimmering in the heated air, lay the great camp of Mulai el Hassan, the late Sultan of Morocco. It was a welcome sight indeed, for whatever reception I might meet with from the Sultan and his officials, I knew this, at least, that my life was safe.' Not so safe after all, however, for Mr Harris was nearly left to die in a mud hut, and met with a very scurvy reception indeed, not even his own countryman, Kaid MacLean, being allowed to go near him for some time.

This, at any rate, was Taflet, where the Sultan lay encamped with forty thousand men, expending five hundred pounds per day on fodder for the horses alone. It is said that this little expedition of his late majesty's cost no less than a million sterling, and the fatigues of it led to his own death ere he could regain Fez.

Taflet is so called after a district in Arabia with a somewhat similar name. It consists of a long strip of irrigated land which extends for many miles along the parallel beds of the rivers Ziz and Gheris, which flow out of the Atlas Mountains. It comprises probably four hundred and fifty square miles of land under dense palm cultivation, and is divided

into seven districts or provinces. So large an extent of country could only be cultivated by means of irrigation, and the system is most extensive. Nature favours the oasis in this way, that the gradual slope of the valley allows the water to be drawn away from the river without the employment of artificial means for raising it being necessary. The canals and conduits are so numerous that they are met with every fifty yards or so. Some of them are very large, with a channel twenty to thirty feet wide, and a depth of four or five feet of swift-flowing water even in the summer time. The channels of the larger canals are bricked and bridged wherever a road crosses the waterway. Most of the water-courses are raised by embankments above the level of the surrounding ground, so that by cutting away a portion of the bank, the stream can be turned on to the level of the soil, and the whole area quickly irrigated. Between the canals the cultivated plots are usually in square beds of ten to twenty yards square, divided from one another by low banks of earth, so that one portion can be flooded, when needed, without wasting water on other portions that may not need it. Sometimes small channels are cut along the top of these banks, so that minor streams can be carried in every direction and turned on when wanted.

All the oasis is under the date-palm, except one district, and whatever other minor crops are cultivated are grown under the palm-trees. So extraordinarily thick are the palm groves, that rarely in Taflet can a view be obtained to a greater distance than one hundred yards in any direction, beyond which the horizon will be bounded by a forest of straight stems. Wad Isli is the name of the central and leading district of the oasis, where the trade and religion centre, and where the prosperity is greatest. It is well sheltered from attack by the other six districts, and here are the sacred tombs, the headquarters of the Governor of Taflet, the great market of Taflet, and the abiding-places of the merchants of Fez, who carry on the trade not only with Morocco and the seaboard, but also with the distant Soudan. All that is prosperous and wealthy in Taflet is to be found in Isli, with its well-kept canals and limitless supply of water, its bridges and its high-walled gardens, with the tops of fruit-trees appearing above the walls, and the water-channels running under.

The line between the desert sand and the irrigated oasis is so clearly defined that one may, on the outer portions, step out of a green field of palm-trees into soft yellow sand over the ankles. So valuable is the land that the roads and tracks through the oasis are made as narrow as possible, and they twist and turn in an extraordinary manner amongst the fields and gardens. Here and there large open spaces are left for the purpose of drying the dates, and for the holding of local markets, or *souks*. The villages are either square or oblong, and are surrounded by concrete walls of great thickness, protected at intervals by towers, and sometimes also by a deep ditch. The inhabitants are both Arabs and Berbers, with a considerable number of Jews, and poverty seems to characterise most of them; for although the

people of Taflet are never absolutely wanting for food, few of them taste flesh-meat oftener than two or three times a year.

It is only by the culture of the date-palm that they are enabled to exist at all. These famous dates are sent by caravan all over Morocco and into the Soudan, while enterprising merchants of Fez carry them on mules and donkeys all the long hot road over the desert, and the cold, toilsome road over the Atlas Mountains to the coast to be shipped to London. Little do we think as we enjoy the fruit what a world of labour it represents, and what a journey it has made from its birth-place in the Sahara!

One must see the oasis, we are told, to realise the enormous quantity of dates grown at Taflet, the gigantic forest of palm-trees so close together that one can see nothing else for miles and miles, save the thread-like lanes and the rippling water-courses. In the district of Wad Iffi grow the finest qualities, known as *Bu Skri* and *Bu Kfus*, which are so highly prized, and the trees are enclosed within high walls. These precious dates are said to spoil by travelling. The common varieties are eaten by the people, the cattle, the goats, and the horses.

When the dates are ripe, the labourers, who are very skilful in climbing, are sent up the trees to cut or shake off the fruit-laden branches. When they tumble to the ground the dates are collected into panniers, and taken on donkey-back to the drying-grounds, where they are laid out in the sun with a guard of women to see that no one steals his neighbour's fruit, though any one may pick up a handful for his individual consumption on the spot. The dates are plucked just before they are actually ripe, for if left to be fully ripe they fall of themselves and are rotted by the irrigation. At the drying-grounds the fruit is poured in great heaps upon the ground, and turned over by the women from time to time to allow the sun to reach the whole of it, and the sight of these great mounds of dates is a curious one.

There are various methods of treatment. One is to leave the dates to be sun-dried singly; another is to crush them into solid masses, which are sewn up in basket-work for transport; another is to crush them into lumps about the size of a turkey's egg. This last is preferred by the poorer natives for travelling purposes, as the lumps are easily carried; but oh! how indigestible they must be, as hard as a stone and as heavy as lead. The caravan route between Fez and Taflet occupies ten or twelve days, and from the oasis trade-roads radiate in almost every direction, but little information is obtainable about them.

Besides dates, wheat and barley are grown in some portions of Taflet, but millet and maize form, with dates, the principal food of the people. In the gardens, grapes, pomegranates, apples, pears, gourds, and melons flourish, as well as cabbages, onions, peas, and beans, but these are only cultivated by the richer classes, the favourite vegetable of the poor being the turnip. There is an export of prepared sheep-skins, famous all over Morocco, the fleece of the Taflet sheep being very fine.

There are also manufacturing gunsmiths and silversmiths, but their work is coarse. Sandals are made locally, but all the best shoes are imported from Fez. Antimony ('kohl') and lead are both found, and the lead is worked for bullets, but it is cheaper to import lead into Morocco from Europe than to work and transport the Taflet mineral. There are no aromatic gums produced in Taflet, but the Soudanese send large quantities there, which the merchants buy up and send on to Fez. The return caravans bring cottons, shoes, silk belts and handkerchiefs, iron bars, candles, sugar, and green tea. The imports are not all for consumption in Taflet, and a good deal is sent on farther into the Sahara and Soudan. Unhappily, too, the slave-trade finds a profitable centre at Taflet, and Mr Harris mentions that when he was there many slaves were brought in from the Soudan and hawked about the Sultan's camp at from thirty to one hundred and twenty dollars per head.

Except the domestic animals there seems to be no variety of animal life in Taflet, and the domestic animals include camels, cattle, horses, mules, donkeys, goats, sheep, dogs, poultry, and pigeons. Gazelles are found in the desert, but do not approach the oasis; and a day or two's journey south the ostrich is encountered.

Such, then, is this strange spot in the distant Sahara, which to most people has been heretofore hardly even a geographical expression, but only associated with a dessert-dish. How difficult of access it is we have seen in the case of Mr Harris, who had to go in the garb of a Moor; and how physically trying is the journey is to be seen in his own illness and the Sultan's death. On the return to the seaboard Mr Harris had the company and protection of Kaid MacLean for a portion of the way, and on reaching Marakesh again had to remain three weeks to recruit. While there the Sultan arrived with the remnants of his host, thousands of the men and about a third of the animals having been frozen to death in the passes of the Atlas, or fallen over the frightful precipices.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

CHAPTER XIX. (continued).

So I sprang out of bed, and dragging the box out of the corner into the middle of the room, I threw open the lid and began to search, taking out the contents slowly, one by one.

The chest had been left just as it was since the old man's death. Nothing had been taken away; only it had been searched a hundred times. Every separate member of the family had searched it over and over again for three generations in hopes of finding that lost fortune. But in vain. And now it was my turn.

The chest contained a collection, of course, which showed travel. It was divided into two unequal compartments; one about two feet six long, and the other about eighteen inches. Both compartments were provided with a tray about

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two and a half inches deep. The things in the chest were not arranged in order, but just lay about, one on the other, piled up, just as they were thrown in by the last who examined the contents. The things were not such as we should now call rare; they consisted of curios brought from voyages in the Far East, and sea-going things of the time. Thus, an ancient rusty flint and steel pistol belonged to the sailor. An Oriental dagger must have been picked up in some native ship in Calicut or Bombay. The mariner's compass, the roll of charts, the telescope, the sextant, the large silver watch—belonged to the sailor; so, I suppose, did a mummified flying-fish, which still preserved something of its ancient salt sea smell; a carved sandal-wood box, one or two Oriental pipes, a large figure of Buddha or somebody else, looking supremely wise and philosophic, or perhaps theosophic; certain silk handkerchiefs mostly eaten by moths, slippers in gilt leather, a book of Hindu pictures, ugly and fleshly, one or two things in mother-of-pearl, half-a-dozen gold rings, twenty or thirty silver bangles tied together; all these things spoke of the Eastern traveller, and, a hundred years ago, would be thought curious.

The first thing that made me jump was a leathern belt, lying at the bottom of the box. A leathern belt! Why, it confirmed, I thought, that strange story concerning the fever-stricken passenger. He had his leathern belt. Well, but anybody may have a leathern belt. And this was quite a common thing; a broad strap with a buckle, black with wear or with age. I took it out and examined it. Now, which was a very remarkable coincidence, the leather was double, it could be pulled open along the upper line, and there was room within for just such a long slim bag as was described by my imaginary Nabob. I passed my fingers along the whole length of this curious double belt—the secret holding belt. No, there were no jewels left.

Nothing more was in the box of the least importance; all the things lay on the floor beside the box; the thing itself, with its lid wide open, stood below the window, the full light falling into its two compartments. As you know, I am a fairly good hand at a lathe, and I am by trade a practical boat-builder, a craftsman; my eye is therefore trained. Now, as I looked into the empty chest thinking about that belt, I perceived that at the back of the chest in the larger compartment, the longer side was not quite at right angles with the bottom of the chest. The difference was very slight, an inclination of a very few degrees from the right angle; still, it was there, and to a practised eye, quite visible. But in the smaller compartment, the right angle left nothing to be desired. It was a true right angle. Was this accidental? I lifted the chest, and changed its position. Yes: there could be no doubt about the inclination of the lower two inches all along the back of the larger compartment. I turned the box over: the back was perfectly rectangular. But here, again, I observed a curious point. The chest was solidly built: the wood was thick

all over: but the wood of the back was two inches thick. Why had they taken such extraordinary precautions to strengthen the chest? And then a strange sense of excitement fell upon me—because I was now quite certain that all these signs meant something which I was going to discover.

The chest was lined with paper of a pattern which contained, at intervals of four or five inches, a black thick line—one of these lines occurred just above the beginning of the angle. The effect of the line was, of course, to darken the part just above and just below. Now, when I looked narrowly into the place, I fancied that I saw below the line another which looked as if it was a solution of the continuity. Two inches below, at the very bottom of the chest, there was a mark of some kind, but not that of a solution of the continuity.

A practical man in the boat-building trade never goes about, even in his bedroom, without a good strong jack-knife, one that will serve many purposes, if necessary. I found mine, and I tested this apparent juncture. Yes: the blade penetrated easily. I passed it along the box, backwards and forwards—the wood creaked, being old and dry. What was the meaning of this slit? I turned the knife round. The wood slowly gave way and this part of the box, grindingly and grudgingly, opened. It turned on creaking hinges, being kept in place by two rusty springs. I dragged it quite open with my fingers. It was a long, narrow, slightly curved shutter, fitting tightly to the side of the box at a small angle, almost imperceptible. Behind, the thick wood of the box had been hollowed out: and thus a secret cupboard was found, the existence of which would never be suspected.

In that narrow recess lay the thing for which everybody had been searching for nearly a hundred years: the cause of the cousins' quarrel and separation: the long narrow bag of brown canvas stuff like one of the old-fashioned purses, only open at the end instead of the middle.

With a beating heart, I took it out. The narrow brown canvas bag—just as the ruined Nabob had told me—did he appear just then in order to tell me? I laid it on the bed. It was tied very tightly with string at one end—there were things in it! What things?

I threw the bag on the bed and leaned out of the window. The morning air was fresh; the sun was bright: the river—I could see it over the boat-shed—danced in the sunlight and the breeze. I sat there for some time—I know not how long—my brain running away with me, filled with confused murmurs—as of people all talking together: the original Robert and George clamouring for a division: old John himself telling us how the great Eastern king bade him fill his pockets and fear not: the poor old ragged Nabob sitting on Wapping Old Stairs in order to bewail his loss, and Isabel whispering that I should be better without these diamonds. A curious jumble of voices, and of thoughts.

Perhaps it was not the bag of diamonds.

I left the window. I dared to put the thing

to the proof; I cut the string with my knife, and I poured out the contents upon the sheet of the open bed.

Heavens! What a shower was that which descended! Danae herself never saw so fine a sight. They fell in a small cascade of splendid light and colour—diamond, pearl, emerald, ruby, sapphire, jasper, topaz, beryl, opal, hyacinth, turquoise, agate, every conceivable gem poured out of the long sack—two feet six long and three inches broad—and there they lay before me in a heap, glittering in the morning light. There were thousands of stones: large and small: not rough stones, but all cut and polished.

I had found the old man's precious hoard. What they were worth I could not imagine, nor have I ever learned. Only to amass such an immense sum in the service of an Eastern Prince, in twenty years, must, I should imagine, as the Nabob hinted, be extremely dangerous to the welfare of the soul.

I ran my fingers through the pile. I played with the pretty things. I threw them up to watch the light playing on them as they fell. I rolled them over and over. Then began various temptations: I am not ashamed to confess to the very elementary suggestion that I should 'sneak' those jewels. Said the voice of the Tempter: 'Nobody knows what you have found. Take the stones and go back to Piccadilly. There will be heaps and heaps for you to live upon in that bag as long as you are likely to live, and afterwards. Piccadilly is much more pleasant than Wapping. Boat-building is a mean, mechanical craft. Remember that you belong to that end of town. This is a Providential occasion: it is sent to you on purpose to restore you to your old position.'

To this Tempter—I don't know why he took the trouble to come at all—one could easily find a reply. 'Sir,' I said, with dignity, 'you do not know to whom you are speaking. Go away, sir. Go to the devil, sir!'

The second Tempter said: 'Why, just as this treasure would have belonged to the original Robert and George, had they found it, so it belongs to the new Robert and George, now that they have found it. Call him in quickly and share it with him. Halves. That will give you both plenty to live upon.'

To which I made answer on reflection: 'My grandfather had brothers and sisters. They went down in the world while he went up. I have cousins somewhere who have as much right to the inheritance as I myself. And Robert has brothers and sisters—no doubt, cousins as well. The inheritance belongs to them as well as to Robert. If every one of us has his share, there will not be much left.'

Then said the Tempter: 'Why tell the far-off, unknown cousins anything about it? Probably they are much better without their share; much best for most men to keep poor; they are out of temptation. Besides, there is not too much to be divided between you and Robert. You will be able to go back to the West End; it's a much more pleasant life. Here you will vegetate and grow stupid; your manners will fall from you; your ideas will grow sordid, like your business. Better go West again, and stay there. You will never

again get such a chance. Boat-building is a mean, mechanical craft.'

'You too,' I said, with a struggle, 'may go to your own place, wherever that may be.'

I put back the stones in their bag. I closed the shutter: I filled the chest with its contents; I closed the lid, and pushed the chest back into the corner. Then I lay down on the bed and fell fast asleep.

When I awoke it was past six, and the life on the river had long since begun. Had I dreamed! At first I thought so. The dream of the unfortunate Nabob and his narrative was just as vivid as the dream of finding the diamonds. Fired with this thought, I sprang out of bed and tore open the box: yes, along the bottom ran that thin line which I had opened with my knife. I doubted no longer.

I had found the diamonds.

I dressed quickly and hurried down to the river, where I went out for a pull in one of our own boats—Burnikel & Burnikel. The exercise and the fresh air set my brain right. I was able to see the thing in its true light, namely—the find did not affect me at all. For nearly ninety years that sea-chest had been in the possession of the tenant of the house; Robert received it as part of his inheritance; to him, as to the eldest, the family house and the family business; to the others, a small sum of money each and the wide, wide world. The chest was Robert's, with all its contents; just as the old man's bed was Robert's, and all the furniture of the house was his.

After breakfast, the Captain retired to his own room. Isabel and I were left alone. She proceeded, according to her wont, to wash up the teacups—it is an ancient, homely custom among old-fashioned housewives, and belongs to a time when china was dear and very precious.

'You look serious, George,' she said. 'Has anything important happened?'

'Something very important.'

'Is it anything that will take you away from this place?'

Then I looked around, and considered this maiden, how sweet and good she was; and how much simpler and sweeter than the girls of society; and how lovely she was, especially when the colour, like the dainty delicate bloom of the peach, rose to her cheek: and how she loved me—that I knew; and how I was bent upon taking her away from her cold, unloving *fiancée*; and how she would never find any place in society where she would be happy; and how I could not live without her.

Of course, the chest belonged absolutely to Robert. The chest and all that it contained.

'No, Isabel, nothing will ever happen that will take me from your presence unless you command me to go.'

Despite my promise, some such words would fly out from time to time. My excuse is that I was thinking continually how to effect Isabel's release.

She made no reply, but went on washing up the cups and saucers.

'Isabel,' I said, remembering the tearful Nabob, 'do you remember telling me about a certain member of your family who came home from India, and always raved about a

lost fortune? Where did your people come from?"

'They lived at Canterbury once.' That was where the Nabob went. 'I do not know how long they lived there.'

'And about that man coming from India? Do you know anything about the fortune that he lost?'

'There was a man once—I have heard my great-grandfather, who lived to a very old age, speak of his uncle, who was a very strange man. He had been abroad, and he was wandering in his wits, and used to sit down and cry over a lost fortune, which he said was in a belt. That is all I know about him. My great-grandfather always said that he believed in the loss of the fortune. But why do you ask?'

'Only because I dreamed about him last night. Odd, wasn't it? Dreamed that he sat on the steps, and wept over his lost fortune.'

'You dreamed about him? About my great-uncle, of whom you have heard that strange thing!'

'Yes. It's a strange world. I dreamed about him. I will tell you some day—soon—what I dreamed. It's a very strange world, indeed, Isabel. And the most wonderful things get found out, years and years and years after they were done and forgotten.'

Then, for reasons of my own, I resolved to tell no one about the diamonds. One or two things had to be done before Robert should learn of his recovered inheritance.

OUR NAVAL INCREASE.

If events had led to a coalition of the Great Powers against England ten years ago, the English navy would have been worsted, and English commerce driven from the seas. If such a coalition were to be formed to-day, England would make a good show against it. It is doubtful, indeed, whether her efforts would be very successful at first, but she would probably be able to hold her own sufficiently long to bring her 'staying' power into evidence. Before she was beaten, her wealth and manufacturing resources would come to the rescue, but only after a terrible sacrifice of life and capital.

But in the near future, if the lesson of the past has been well learnt, and if our vigilance and precautions be not again relaxed, we shall be able to regard the possibility of such a hostile coalition with confidence. For, granting that the naval progress of the past decade be maintained for the next five or six years, England will then be in a position to speak with paramount authority on all colonial questions, even in the face of a combination of all the powers.

A probable defeat, a hard struggle, a sure hope of victory. Such is the briefest summary of our position at sea in the immediate past, the present, and perhaps the future.

It was in 1885 that this country began to wake from her naval lethargy. Grave foreign

complications arose at that time, and war seemed imminent. In face of such a possibility a careful estimate had to be made of our naval resources, and they were found wanting. Though war was happily averted, public attention had been roused, and the conviction that we were unprepared to meet any serious naval attack, produced a most painful impression throughout the country. In spite of paltry efforts at naval reform, that impression continued to deepen until all classes united in demanding vigorous action; and the Naval Defence Act of 1889 was the direct outcome of the agitation.

That Act provided for an addition to the navy of seventy ships, and ten of them were to be first-class armour-clads. This was indeed a step in the right direction.

After the Act of 1889 followed something of a lull, and not so much activity was shown in 1892-93 and 1893-94; though in that period were laid down the battleships *Majestic*, *Magnificent*, and *Renown*, and those great 14,000 ton first-class cruisers, *Terrible* and *Powerful*, with an ocean speed of twenty-two knots.

But the country had been roused too effectually to admit of any return to the old *laissez aller* policy. In 1894, popular opinion demanded another increase, and what is known as Lord Spencer's Programme was passed. That great scheme made provision for seven first-class battleships, four first-class cruisers, ten second-class cruisers, two third-class cruisers, and a most important item of fifty-six torpedo-boat destroyers. Of all these ships a fair proportion are already complete and the remainder are approaching completion.

Before turning to Mr Goschen's new programme of 1896, it may be well to consider what circumstances have led to the necessity for another exceptional naval effort before Lord Spencer's scheme has reached maturity. Politicians may mince words as they will, or endeavour to mask facts in the passionless phraseology of diplomacy; but the real reason for our activity is to be sought, as every one knows, in the 'messages' of Mr Cleveland and the Emperor of Germany. As England woke up in 1885, and found herself unable to face a *probable* hostile combination, so in 1896 she wakes again and finds herself unable to face with security a *possible* combination. If any one had told us a year ago that the time would come when we should have to reckon not only with the old bugbears of Russia and France, but with entirely new adversaries in America and Germany, he would have been looked upon as a visionary and alarmist. And yet, what serious-minded Englishman but would have wished a month or two ago to see a few more gallant ships at Portsmouth and Plymouth, and a few more gallant men to fight them, if the word was passed for fighting!

The command of the sea against *all* comers;

that is the text on which Mr Cleveland and the Emperor of Germany have preached sermons to us. We have taken their lessons to heart, and the first earnest of our repentance and resolve to mend our ways is the Naval Programme for 1896. Mr Goschen's scheme is a compromise as regards outlay between the optimism of the peace party, and the jingoism of alarmists.

Besides being a compromise as regards the amount of money to be spent, Mr Goschen's scheme is a compromise as regards the details of its spending. It is an open secret that the Admiralty had under their consideration two building programmes. The first advocated spending money in the way in which it would produce the greatest show in the shortest possible time; that is, in accelerating the completion of ships already under construction, and in building torpedo boats, torpedo catchers, third-class cruisers, and other small fry, all of which could be ready within twelve months. The second made battleships and first-class cruisers (needing from two to three years for construction) the *pièce de résistance*. The programme actually adopted takes a *via media* between these extremes. It provides a great deal of acceleration for ships already in construction, a fair proportion of the torpedo catcher element, and a strong backbone of battleships and big cruisers. Five battleships, four first-class cruisers, three second-class cruisers, six third-class cruisers, twenty-eight torpedo-boat destroyers; that is the addition to our fleet which Mr Goschen proposes: and the verdict of well-informed and non-extremist circles approves this addition as being carefully considered, and conceived in a large-minded spirit. What scope exists for the acceleration of ships already building, can be best appreciated by stating that under Lord Spencer's scheme there still remain to be completed eight battleships, twenty-one cruisers, and forty torpedo-boat destroyers. The work on all these ships will, no doubt, be pushed forward very rapidly, and their original dates of completion will be anticipated. The case of the great battleships *Majestic* and *Magnificent*, which have just joined the Channel Squadron many months in advance of their due time, will show to what extent the accelerating process can be carried.

For the uninitiated, a word as to the general classification of warships may not be out of place. In the English service, a first-class battleship has come to mean a vessel of the very latest design, protected by heavy side armour, and carrying the most powerful guns. Theoretically, a battleship is supposed to be able to hold her own under any circumstances, and to retire before no antagonist. Their speeds vary from fifteen to eighteen knots an hour, and the epithet first class is not applied to ships of less than ten thousand tons displacement. It is not that size *per se* is any advantage, but experience has shown that the desiderata necessary to give a ship first-rate effectiveness cannot be combined in vessels under a certain size. Cruisers are vessels with less side armour, or altogether without side armour, though they are protected by an armoured deck just below the water-line, which screens

magazines and engines from shells bursting above. They have higher speeds than ironclads, varying from seventeen to twenty-two knots an hour, carry lighter guns, and rely on their offensive power to crush a weaker adversary, or on their speed to show a clean pair of heels to a too powerful foe. Cruisers are divided into first class, seven to fourteen thousand tons displacement; second class, five to seven thousand; and third class, any smaller than five thousand.

All 'madness of extremes' has been avoided in the design of Mr Goschen's ships. The size of his armour-clads, instead of being increased, has been reduced, and the new ships are to be less in displacement by some two thousand tons than the *Majestic*. Thus, what has happened in the case of the guns, has now happened in the case of the ships.

As the improvement in the manufacture of powders has allowed the size of guns to be enormously reduced without sacrifice of effective power, and the fifty-ton gun of to-day takes the place of the one hundred and ten gun of a few years ago; so increased power of boilers and other modern improvements has made it possible to reduce the displacement of the new battleships to twelve thousand nine hundred tons instead of the fourteen thousand nine hundred tons of the *Majestic*.

The guns remain the same as in the *Majestic*. The speed is slightly increased, being $18\frac{1}{2}$ knots, as against the $17\frac{1}{2}$ knots of the *Majestic*; and the coal-carrying capacity is not diminished. This last is a most important feature in such world-rovers as our men-of-war have to be, and the new battleships have a specially wide 'radius of action.'

For their heavy armament they carry four twelve-inch guns of the latest design. And as the various nomenclatures adopted for modern guns give rise sometimes to confusion in the lay mind, we may say that a twelve-inch gun means a breech-loading rifled weapon whose bore measures twelve inches in inside diameter, but as its weight is forty-nine tons, it is sometimes described as a forty-nine ton gun. Again, it may be said, as a general rule, that if two guns of the same calibre vary in length, the longer is more powerful, and these new twelve-inch guns have exceptional length, being forty-two times as long as their bore, that is, of over five hundred inches.

The new programme includes a great deal more than ships and guns. A special section provides for the building of new docks and harbour accommodation on various foreign stations, and a heavy outlay is appropriated to that object. It requires perhaps the eye of an expert to appreciate properly the strategic value of Mauritius or Simon's Town, and though docks at those stations are in contemplation, they are not included in the present estimate; but every one realises the importance* of Gibraltar, and the strengthening of our position there is sure to be a very popular item in Mr Goschen's

* The strategic value of Gibraltar has been greatly increased by the recent establishment of a branch naval station at Biserta, on the north-west coast of Africa. French roadsteads on both sides of the Mediterranean, at Toulon and Biserta, would render it less easy to maintain our communication with Malta.

scheme. The fortifications of Gibraltar are confessedly obsolete; but even if they were brought thoroughly up to date, it would be quite impossible for any land guns to hold the mouth of the Mediterranean. The distance from shore to shore is at least fifteen miles, a range far beyond the command of the heaviest guns. This being so, it follows that in time of war, if the straits are to be held at all, they must be held by our ships, and it is as a base for such ships that the new harbour-works and docks are being provided. At present, the accommodation at Gibraltar for men-of-war is altogether inadequate; but the proposed mole and three large docks will make the place a first-rate offensive base, as well as a harbour of refuge for mangled ships. The additional security thus afforded is cheap enough even at a cost of two and a half millions.

Turning from material to personnel. Increase of ships, as Mr Goschen is careful to point out, means increase of men to fight them, and this, in turn, means increase of schools, barracks, and hospitals, and outlay must be faced in all these directions. Four thousand nine hundred men are to be added to our naval forces, and it will probably be a surprise to many people to learn that no difficulty whatever is anticipated in obtaining that number, so far as seamen, stokers, and marines are concerned. There was a prevalent idea that naval recruiting was not so popular as it might be, and general relief has been experienced at an authoritative statement that this idea is without foundation. No doubt the recent policy of sending fine ships on recruiting cruises to our great ports, and thus bringing the glamour of the service before the eyes of our seafaring population, has materially conduced to this happy result.

There is, unfortunately, more difficulty as regards the supply of properly qualified officers; not because there is any lack of enthusiasm or dearth of splendid material, but because the admission of naval cadets has been unduly restricted in the past. A naval officer is just the reverse of the proverbial poet, he is not 'born' but 'made;' and the years which, from a naval point of view, the locust has eaten in the past are still exercising an evil influence in the present scarcity of young officers. Because fewer ships were built in all those years, there were fewer ships in commission, and fewer officers required; this led to a stagnation of promotion which it was attempted to counteract by reducing the number of cadets admitted to the service. With the present expansion of the navy, the ordinary progress of promotion has been restored, and more liberal admission established; but meanwhile, a ready-made officer is not an easy thing to find. It is indeed a cruel situation that the service should be suffering from a want of officers, when so many hopes have been upset, and so many first-rate candidates turned away by the improvident curtailment of the entrance list in the past.

Two changes in the education of officers hinted at in Mr Goschen's speech are of special interest. It is proposed to raise the limit of age in entering the service from $14\frac{1}{2}$ to $15\frac{1}{2}$, and to train the cadets in a school on shore instead of in the two hulks which pass under

the name of the *Britannia*. Both these modifications deserve general approval. Raising the age of entry will strike a blow at the 'cramming' system, vicious enough at all ages, but most vicious with the very young; will give the boys the chance of a better general education, and start them with the traditions of a public school instead of those of a cramming-house. The objections to substituting a shore college for the hulks are little more than sentimental. Most naval officers who have been through the *Britannia* themselves, and especially those who have sons they hope to send by-and-by, will believe that the school-life will be carried on better ashore than afloat from a disciplinary, moral, and perhaps sanitary point of view. It is idle to talk of much practical experience of modern ironclads being gained in old wooden hulks which admit of billiard tables!

Every one has seen from time to time letters in the newspapers over the signatures of half-pay officers, or amateur naval faddists, in which one navy is compared with another in neatly tabulated statements, as one might strike the balance of a petty trading company. But such comparisons are a laughing-stock to the expert, for he knows perfectly well that even the roughest comparative estimate can only be made after detailed and intricate investigation, and that any attempt to put such results on paper in a popular form is a mere puerility. It is difficult even to class the principal navies in a general order of strength, though modern practice would perhaps arrange them as follows: England, France, Italy, Russia, United States, and Germany. Then there are the South American Republics, Chili, Argentina, and Brazil, of which the two first possess some very fine modern cruisers. But all three may be left out of the question, for they have a little fighting coterie among themselves, and their energies are usually absorbed in cutting one another's throats. Last, but not least, there is Japan, flushed with victory, and reinforced with the debris of the Chinese fleet. She has just sanctioned a stupendous programme of naval increase, which, when completed in four years' time, will perhaps place her third in the list of naval powers. Her sympathies are for the present entirely with England, and it is not too much to hope that she may prove some day an invaluable ally in Eastern waters.

It is even more difficult to gauge the qualities of the personnel than those of the ships. The days are long past when we sang in a free-and-easy way:

Two jolly Frenchmen and one Portugee,
One jolly Englishman could lick them all three.

We are ready enough now to give our possible adversaries all credit for pluck, and perhaps for technical skill, and yet, as regards practice in the use of their weapons, we still have them at an immeasurable disadvantage. This factor is commonly omitted from newspaper comparisons, but it would probably have more weight than any other in determining the issue of an actual struggle. Two duellists may each have lion hearts and each the best Damascus blades; but if one has ten times more practice in the

art of fencing than the other, it is long odds that he will win. So it is with our navy; it has a far greater knowledge of ships acquired by actual manœuvring at sea, and a far greater knowledge of guns acquired by actual firing practice than any other power. And the reason of this is precisely because such knowledge is a very expensive thing to acquire, and England is the only nation that cares to afford it. It is probable that where France (the next naval power) spends one million in sea-cruising and gun-firing, we spend five. From every gun in our navy having a calibre of ten inches and under, there are fired each quarter eight rounds of ammunition by way of practice; and from all guns heavier than the ten-inch, four rounds a quarter, irrespective of the additional rounds used in the annual 'Prize-firing.' The heavy expenditure involved in this item alone may be hinted at by observing that every full round fired from a six-inch gun costs £16; from an eight-inch gun, £30; from a twelve-inch gun, £123; and from the 16.25 inch or hundred and ten ton gun, as much as £300. And these figures are only a small part of the story, for the life of a very heavy gun is not a long one; and though a six-inch gun can fire as many as five hundred rounds, seventy or eighty full rounds are the limit of the hundred and ten ton; after firing that amount they will both require a new inner tube, a costly matter enough.

Nothing perhaps has contributed more to keep our navy 'up to the mark' than the naval manœuvres which have become an annual institution. When they were commenced in 1887, and the navy was mobilised for the first time, a lamentable deficiency was made manifest both in stores and men; there was not a ship that went away with her stores complete, the services of every available man were requisitioned, every seaman undergoing gunnery training in the *Excellent* was taken, and even so the ships were short-handed. A few years of annual mobilisation has completely altered all this; there is no question now of missing stores, and in last year's manœuvres 1200 seamen were left on the *Excellent*; 'it was not considered advisable to disturb their training.'

Let us be thankful for such improvement in the past, and look forward with a firm resolve to maintain it in the future. A generous naval expenditure is not the most costly in the end. Our policy is to make it clear to the world that we intend under all conditions and at whatever sacrifice to maintain our naval supremacy intact and indisputable, and the sooner we make that clear the better and the cheaper. If foreign powers build one new warship, let us build two, and they will soon tire. France, by abandoning the building of ironclads, is already giving signs of tiring, while the German people showed their good sense a month ago by refusing to enter the lists of naval competition, and rejecting the proposals for a great increase of their navy. It is true enough that a general reduction in naval expenditure is much to be desired, but the move in that direction must be made by other powers; we cannot afford to take the first step. And such a policy has nothing in it of brag or belli-

cosity. It is the only policy for a country that owns three-fourths of the ships of the world, and that imports more than three-fourths of its food. It is a policy justified by our financial state and manufacturing resources;* it is, in a word, a necessary condition of our national existence.

M. F.

THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF JOHN PERCIVAL.

CHAPTER IV.

THUS John found himself involved in a duel to the death, as it seemed, with an intelligence probably quicker than his own, and with many advantages over him, as he speedily realised.

Next day he surprised a group of young men in his own very bank, the centre of his life in Duntrum, where up to this present moment he had been so easily the chief personage. He came in in the midst of a burst of laughter, through which he heard the phrase, 'She made fine sport of him. He'll not crawl so crouse again, I'm thinking.' While the sound of the laughter filled the room, John came into sight, asking quietly, 'Who is it that will not crawl so crouse?' and the group melted before him, every man looking more conscious than the other.

'Oh, it was only a joke of some of the girls,' said young Maxwell, very crestfallen.

John went grimly to his desk, and made no sign, but he knew very well that he was the subject of the joke; and they knew very well that he knew. He had not thought that his antagonist was of such force; but, indeed, to conceive and carry out so unflinchingly such a bold plan showed that she could be of no small force, and he reflected upon her and on what might be in store for him very gravely as he sat at his desk in the midst of an unusual silence in the office for the rest of the morning, paying, if truth must be told, very little attention to the country business which he had been sent to study, and which he had at that moment unusual facilities for studying, as it was market-day.

There was another party that evening, to which he went quite prepared for the fate which was about to overtake him, and which did overtake him accordingly. None of the young ladies of Duntrum would dance with John. Some of the girls looked mischievous, some regretful, but only one out of the troop of pretty creatures with whom he had hitherto been so popular, could find a single dance for

* It is worth quoting as a striking instance of these resources, that when official inquiry was made a month or two ago as to the war material under manufacture in English private yards, it was found that in Lord Armstrong's great arsenal at Elswick alone, there were then employed eighteen thousand men, while thirteen ironclads and cruisers, and one thousand four hundred guns were being built.

him. That one was Marion Wamphrey, who pointed with a sparkle in her eye to one line in her programme which had been left free, and danced it majestically, treating him with a lofty civility which did a little to crush his spirit, but filled him more and more with the rage of battle. After that experience, John faced the chances of Society in Duntrum no more. He withdrew before the moment when, as in most of their little assemblies, dancing began; for in those days in Scotland, most entertainments ended in a dance; the young people being quite unfastidious and as willing to amuse themselves on a carpet as on the most beautifully waxed floors. John withdrew; and he was comforted to find that he was missed. There was no longer any fun in refusing to dance with the best partner in the room, when he was not there to be vexed by the affront, and there was soon a revolt against Marion, as would no doubt have happened in any case, and those who had lent themselves to her revenge loudly complained that she had driven their finest performer away. 'He told us all the new figures, and the French step that nobody here has learnt yet,' moaned the culprits of that night, 'led away,' they could not quite tell why, by Marion, 'and she gave him a dance herself!' they remembered. Did she want to keep him to herself? Was that her treacherous reason? So that before the winter was half over, John would have been received with open arms had he gone back: but he did not go back. He felt himself master of the situation, and determined to retain it, even at the cost of a little self-denial, which it certainly involved, for he was a young man of his period, not of this, and loved to find himself in the midst of pretty faces, and to show the new French steps, and the new figures, and to feel himself the king of the company as he had formerly done.

However, it was all the better for business that he should have had this check in the middle of his career. For it set him on giving his attention to the country business, and to the transactions of the bank with the little banking establishments in the little towns around, branches of the Duntrum Company or of others. Especially—and this the reader will understand, without perhaps crediting John with very great devotion to business, considered on its own merits—he was eager to inquire into the business with Dunscore, which had such a curious connection with the little drama to which he had been introduced, in spite of himself. And he accepted with great alacrity, about the new year, a commission to go to that place on the affairs of the bank, and to consult with the managers there concerning some changes which it was thought expedient to make. Messrs Percival in Edinburgh were delighted to think that their nephew had been

chosen for this commission. It showed, as they concluded, that the boy must be showing some real business capacity, or he would not have been chosen for such an office, and also a considerable interest on his part, or he would not have devoted himself to it. So that it made a very good impression, much to his favour, at home.

John appeared too at Dunscore to much advantage, with his look of gravity and interest in the suggested changes, and secured the full attention of the manager, who, knowing his connection with the Percivals, felt great interest in him as a rising young man, devoted to business, and anxious to extend his knowledge. He gave John a great deal of information as to the working of the banking system in the country, and all the difficulties which a manager had to encounter. When the business was over, the conversation went off to lighter subjects: but, indeed, it grew naturally out of it that he should inquire about the lost letter which had been in the stolen mail-bag, and whether there had been any light thrown upon that curious theft and its motives. The manager was very ready to talk on this subject, which was the most romantic incident that had been known in the country for ages past.

'Indeed,' he said, 'since the time when one of the Cochrans dressed herself up like a highwayman, and waylaid the mails—which took place not very far from the same spot.'

'What was that story?' said John.

'Did you never hear of it? It is just such another story. It was after Argyll's rebellion in 1685, and the warrant for her father's execution was supposed to be in the bag'—

'Her father?' said John.

'Oh, ay, it was a young lass. And did it never occur to you, Mr Percival,' said the manager, 'that this might well be a woman's work? You see Grizel Cochrane's story is well known, and women are grand actors when they have a purpose to serve. They say you saw a woman shut the coach door just after your queer passenger disappeared.'

'It is quite true; but do you think a woman would have the nerve and the courage?'

'Oh, pooh! Nerve? they've nerve for anything when they've motive enough; and courage? There's no a deevil for daring like a young lass, they're worse than the lads; they never count the cost. I would just like to know if that is not your own point of view.'

'But the motive?' said John.

'Oh, deed, there was motive enough. That big letter, Mr John, conveyed enough matter to distress, maybe to ruin, two or three families. There's times when even delay will save a man's credit: but clean destruction of bills and bonds—Lord, man, it's just salvation to some poor struggling men. There was an honest farmer that had kept up a sore struggle, my own very heart was wae for him when I put his bill in the packet. It would have been a question of roup and banishment, and an honest fellow, as honest as ever ploughed field. He came here like an honourable man, and bound himself over

again for the sum, with a little delay, which we were glad to grant. Ay, and there was another, a gentleman's son, a wild fellow. I'm misdoubting he put his father's name to a bit of paper the worthy laird never saw, and a grand escape he has had. No, I don't think the bank will have very much loss, excepting just that one case.'

'And who was the man, may I ask?' said John.

'I ought not to tell after what I have just said, for it would be a libel if ever it was repeated, and there's no evidence. Well, as you are, so to speak, in the business, Mr John, and in a manner concerned with the robbery, I may strain a point for you. It was just Will Wamphrey, the son of auld Wamphrey, of Craighorn. He's away abroad now, and maybe he will never hear of it, unless, as I strongly suspect, that it was one of his gilpies that robbed the mail.'

'His gilpies!' said John. He felt a flush of anger at the name.

'Just that,' said the manager, nodding his head. 'Plenty of them took an interest in him, if all tales are true. I have always thought it was some bold hizzy that was o'er the Border after him, and away to some seaport, while these police birkies were riding the country. Ye never can get them to turn their horses' heads the right way till the guilty person's well out of reach. Wull,' he said, getting a little more familiar in his accent as the story warmed him, 'was a wild deevil, and never out of mischief; but his father is a dooce man, and we were all very sorry for him. I'm mostly glad, though it will be a loss to the bank, that yon bit of paper is out of the way. And they say that old Wamphrey had sworn an oath that if he played another pliskie, he should be cast off without a shilling, instead of being sent creditably to try his luck again, which is what has been done.'

'This, if it came true, would make it a complete romance of the road,' said John.

'That is just what it is, a woman,' said the other, 'and the best thing he could do would be to marry the lass, and take her with him out of the gait of justice. For my Lords Justiciary would take little heed, I fear, of the romantic circumstances if she were brought before them, which would be sure to happen sooner or later if she were to bide in this country. Somebody must have seen her—you did yourself, by the way, Mr John, as I have heard.'

'I saw a country woman close the door,' he said. He was glad that he had the time to prepare his answer, while the good man went on. 'A person passing, I have little doubt, who saw it swinging open. And it was a momentary glimpse that I could not trust to. It would be a hard case if suspicion was thrown upon a decent woman returning from her work in the fields, and doing what she thought was a kind action as she passed.'

'Bless me, that is true,' said the bank manager, 'but I understood you were of the opinion that it might be the very miss herself.'

'I never meant to convey that impression,' said John, with an immovable countenance.

'It was a country lass; most likely a farm-servant going back a little late from the fields.'

'Oh-h,' said the manager. He added, after a pause, 'I have maybe been rash in making up such a story. It might be no woman after all. But there's no telling,' he continued with a laugh; 'Will Wamphrey had friends in all stations, though a country lass would scarcely have had the cleverness to carry it through.'

John could scarcely help applying uncivil words to this genial person as he talked. A country lass! There were different kinds of country lasses: and the way in which this mere bank manager permitted himself to talk of one who was neither a gilpie nor a miss, nor, in short, anything that came within the range of such a critic, gave him a sensation of anger. Why should it give John, who was really the only witness against her, a sensation of anger? He could not tell. Nothing could be more absurd, and out of all agreement with the circumstances; yet he called Mr Scott several unpleasant names within himself. What did he know about it? a mere vulgar, little country-town man, a village magnate. That he should take upon himself to judge, could think himself qualified! The man was extremely charitable on the subject, and took what seemed to himself much too lenient a view; but it did not, as appeared, satisfy John, whose feelings were quite unexplainable even to himself. So far as he was aware, he wanted to find out everything about the business, but he did not choose that any one else should find out, or should prejudge or venture to form theories about it even to himself. And as he went back to Duntrum, John began to take himself to task, and to inquire into the nature of his own thoughts. Did he really, after all, believe that Marion Wamphrey was the heroine of his great adventure? Had he not seized upon the idea 'for fun,' as they all said, to give himself a reason for making a certain intimacy, a teasing acquaintance with the prettiest girl in the room, pretending to have this tremendous matter against her? He said to himself that this had really been all that was in his mind, when her own consciousness, her readiness to defy him, her anxious look, as of one who expected to be attacked, had turned his wavering, half-real recognition into certainty. He would not have permitted himself even to think of such a thing, to do more than to perplex her with a jest, but for that foreknowledge on her part, so clearly marking that she knew all, and more than all he could say. This had startled and shocked him into saying many things he had not intended, and into persecuting her with hints and suggestions, as if he were quite sure of what was merely a vague suspicion. He took himself to task now as he went home. Had he really any ground for the attack he had made upon this young lady? A momentary glimpse of a face in a dark winter night, was that enough to build such an accusation upon? And he had as good as accused her, if not of the theft, at least of having been seen in circumstances of suspicion on the night when the theft was made. He had begun lightly enough: he had been himself startled by her response of eye and attitude: and now that he had hunted out

this fresh information, which threw so living a light upon it all, he found himself forced to the conviction that it must be true. In the teeth of that conviction, he asked himself indignantly how he had dared to believe such a thing of an innocent girl, a girl whom he had met at a dance, blooming, gay, and full of confidence in all about her. Was that the person to accuse, even in your own mind, of robbing His Majesty's mails? It was preposterous; it was as false as anything could be. It might have been, as Scott said, a gilpie, one of the many loves of this Will Wamphrey bent on serving him, and not too particular about the method; but Marion! with her white dress and her pearl necklace, and the flowers in her hair. It was, of course, impossible; it was impossible! Having said this to himself, he added, with a quick-drawn breath, that now the chain of evidence was complete, that the only thing wanting had been a motive, and now here was the motive abundantly supplied.

John jumped from his post-chaise at the foot of the hill where that adventure had taken place. It was now the end of February, and this had been a hazy, gray day, full of cold, yet at the same time of that indescribable thrill which shows us that the sap is moving in the veins of the old earth, and spring coming, though perhaps her footstep has but touched the heights. He was so restless with the movement of the thoughts that were rising in his own breast, that it gave him a little relief to walk. It was almost dark, and nobody was about. He stood still for a little, and looked over the hedge at the spot where the coach had stopped. It was a high and stiff hedge, hawthorn, full of strong prickles, and closely grown; there was a shallow ditch on the other side, and beyond that a large field, a little undulating, with little knowes and hollows. How did she get through the hedge, or over it? Where did she disappear to? How was it that with all their lanterns and all their eyes no one caught so much as a shadow of her? He examined the place very closely, and found that a little below there was a gap through which it was just possible an adroit person might squeeze. But it was almost impossible, if that was the mode of her escape, to imagine that so soon she could have got under cover. Not far from the hedge there was a group of half-grown rowan trees, forming a thick clump at the bottom, though very thin and wind-blown in the upper branches. They had been quite invisible in the darkness of the night, and he did not think there had been any proper search made at the moment of the wide open stretch of the field where there was so little possibility of concealment.

He was full of the recollection of that night, and of interest in the culprit whom all his investigations seemed to force him to identify almost against his will: and his inclination to follow what must have been her steps in her retreat was strong. The ground, he knew, had been gone over again and again, but no trace had been found, and it was highly unlikely now, when two months had passed, that he should find any trace of her. But he squeezed himself through the gap, with the unpleasant

result of finding himself almost up to his knees in the muddy ditch at the foot of the hedge. There had been a great deal of rain in the past week, and not only was the ditch full, but the field was an expanse of soft mud, a little bound together by the grass, but slippery and soft, so that it was hard to get a footing as he scrambled out of the ditch. This was not a pleasant beginning, but he was determined to make his way to the little cluster of the rowans, and make sure for himself whether there was any possible shelter for a fugitive there. A more miserable spot there could not be. How a woman, encumbered by petticoats and cloaks as his fellow-traveller had been, could have slid and scrambled along, unheard, toward that little island in the muddy field, if that indeed had been where she went—and it was the only covert within sight—he could not divine. And very poor was the covert, a bundle of saplings, not much more; slim stems of young trees growing upon a small mound. But the farther side of this hillock, he found, fell abruptly, a little precipice of five or six feet. He had nearly fallen over it, which impressed it on his mind; and when he slid down on the treacherous and muddy slope at one side, he found that the bank above overhung a little, so as to make a shelter quite available, a sort of shallow cave. Had she come here, in the deep darkness, that daring girl? and listened to the ineffectual stir of her pursuers, the gleams of their lanterns? He tried to realise the situation. It was now only twilight, but it was difficult to distinguish anything across the damp level of the field which spread dismal round him. What could it have been in the mirk of the night, getting towards midnight, and black as winter and desolation could make it! Had she couched here, cold, encumbered with her disguise, never knowing when a light might flash round the corner upon her? John shivered with sympathy, yet felt also something of the whirl of excitement which must have been in all her being.

As he stood against the damp wall of mossy earth, held together by the roots of the rowans, he suddenly saw a speck of white in a crevice among the twisted roots. He pulled it out, or tried to do so, but it resisted his efforts. Finally, digging with his stick, and pulling with his hands, at risk of bringing the whole mound down upon him, he disinterred from the network of rough and twisted stems a handkerchief, then something black and large, which he could not distinguish, and finally the skin of an orange. John's heart, already panting with the toil, gave a jump into his throat. The white handkerchief was folded into a sort of bandage, and had evidently been tied round the head; the large, black square was one of the huge neckcloths (so-called) of the period. These formed, no doubt, the wonderful headgear which his fellow-traveller had worn. But the orange skin overwhelmed John with an impulse to laugh and to cry together. It was one of his oranges which he had brought in in kindness for the poor old lady. She had remembered them in danger and horror, and eaten it while they were looking for her. That daring creature defying heaven and earth, wet, cold, miserable,

and—guilty. She had eaten his orange to comfort her, the poor little demon of a girl!

And was that Marion Wamphrey all white and dazzling, with the pearls on her throat, and the roses in her hair?

WRITERS' PRIDE.

MEN and women who write may be divided into two main classes; those who write for money, and those who write for fame. There is said to be a third class composed of those who put pen to paper solely for the benefit and enlightenment of their fellow-creatures, insensible alike to censure and applause, and regardless whether renown or obscurity be their portion. The good opinion of readers cannot but be grateful to writers, whatever, in the vanity of their heart, they may insinuate to the contrary: consequently the number of such moral heroes must be exceedingly small, and, as they are very apt to deceive both themselves and their readers as to the motives which impel them, they may be dismissed in these few words.

Concerning those who write for money, or, in other words, for support, there is little to be said. There are two very old sayings, *vexatio dat intellectum*, hardship improves the understanding; and *ingenii largitor venter*, hunger sharpens the wits; sayings which certainly receive some confirmation in the case of men like Oliver Goldsmith; and many instances could be quoted in which poverty seems to have exerted a favourable influence on poetry. Milton was poor and unpatronised, and so was Shakespeare; Samuel Butler, author of *Hudibras*, to whose memory a monument was erected in Westminster Abbey, is a striking example, and was cleverly epigrammatised by Mr Wesley:

While Butler, needy wretch, was yet alive,
No generous patron would a dinner give.
See him, when starv'd to death, and turn'd to dust,
Presented with a monumental bust!
The poet's fate is here in emblem shown,
He ask'd for bread, and he receiv'd a stone.

On the other hand, it is asserted that, in order to write well, the mind must be free from anxiety, 'nor be troubled with the care of procuring a blanket.'

Among the other and far larger class, those who write for fame, as Persius puts it:

Digito monstrari et dicier hic est
(To hear it said—there, there he goes),

many of our best authors have unblushingly ranked themselves, and they own to an intense enjoyment that never seems to cloy, at seeing their works in print:

None but the author knows an author's cares,
Or Fanny's fondness for the child she bears;
Committed once into the public arms,
The baby seems to smile with added charms.

Nor is there any cause for shame in such confession. Cicero, than whom the world has produced few better writers, felt and honestly avowed a love of fame, and recorded his opinion that the best and noblest natures are the most powerfully actuated by the prospect of glory. Southey, when well-stricken in years, wrote to his old school-fellow Charles Wynn: 'The

greatest pleasure I have with a book of my own is in cutting open the leaves when it comes to me.' Dickens has told us of the keen emotion that overcame him on seeing in print his first 'effusion,' as he styled it, which he had dropped stealthily one evening at twilight, with fear and trembling, into a dark letter-box, in a dark office, up a dark court in Fleet Street; and how, when it appeared next morning, he went for half an hour into Westminster Hall, 'because my eyes were so dimmed with joy and pride, that they could not bear the street.' Charles Mathews the Elder describes the delight with which he gazed on the first proof of his translation of the *Princess of Cleves*, which appeared by monthly instalments in *The Lady's Magazine*, as 'boundless,' and how he fancied the eyes of Europe were upon him, and that the ladies who subscribed to that periodical would unite in calling on the editor to insist on 'C. M.' declaring himself. Poor Haydon has left a vivid record of the 'fluster of elation' with which he greeted the result of his having dropped a little composition into the letter-box of *The Examiner*. 'Never,' he writes, 'shall I forget that Sunday morning. In came the paper, wet and uncut; in went the paper-knife—cut, cut, cut. Affecting not to be interested, I turned the pages open to dry, and to my certain immortality beheld, with a delight not to be expressed, the first sentence of my letter. I put down the paper, walked about the room, looked at Macbeth (a print on the wall), made the tea, buttered the toast, put in the sugar, with that inexpressible suppressed chuckle of delight which always attends a condescending relinquishment of an anticipated rapture till one is perfectly ready. Who has not felt this? Who has not done this?'

Tom Moore thus opens a paragraph in his autobiography: 'It was in the year 1793 that for the first time I enjoyed the high honour and great glory (for such it truly was to me) of seeing verses of my own in print.' These were some lines, headed 'To Zelia,' which appeared in the *Anthologia Hibernica*; and he goes on to tell of his intense pride at finding himself classed as an 'esteemed contributor' in the first published list of subscribers to that magazine. Burton, writing to Crabbe, mentions his having written, years before, some verses in a child's annual, to accompany a print of Doddridge's mother teaching him Bible history from the Dutch tiles round the fireplace. He had quite forgotten all about these verses, as well as the print, when some one sent him a penny cotton handkerchief, on which was a print of the picture, and four of his stanzas under it. This he considered proof positive of true fame.

Douglas Jerrold, when a young compositor in Bigg's printing-office in Lombard Street, wrote a criticism on *Der Freischütz*, and dropped it into his employer's letter-box. This cost him a sleepless night, but he was recompensed by having his composition handed to him next morning to (technically) compose. His sisters tell of the boisterous delight with which he would often afterwards bound into the house with a copy of *Arbiss's Magazine* in his hand, shouting, 'It's in again! It's in again!' Samuel Rogers expatiates on the 'to all agree-

able, to many intoxicating' impression produced by first seeing himself in print in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1781, and talks of 'the amorous fond delay with which young authorship lingers over an inspection of his printed handiwork.'

If then it be wrong to experience a feeling of internal satisfaction at the sight of one's printed lucubrations, there is, at all events, the consolation of sinning in good company; and though this infirmity of human nature may be lamented, the number of writers excited by a similar cause will always keep each other in countenance. Pride is a weakness very difficult to define. It takes so many forms: pride of purse; haughtiness of soul; that which 'goeth before destruction;' that which apes humility, declared by both Southey and Coleridge to be Satan's darling sin. But a writer's pride is different from any of these, and undoubtedly superior, since it offends nobody, and produces a feeling of genuine and lasting pleasure, unaffected by time or the decay of fortune. It partakes more of elatedness, or, if we may so express it, of a *finis coronat opus* sense of complacency. The worst charge, perhaps, that can be laid against it is that of self-love, which Shakespeare avows is 'not so vile a sin as self-neglecting.'

A GOSSIP ON GARDENS.

It was a pretty sentiment of Nestor Roqueplan that 'God gave blonde hair to the women of the North to console the men for having no sun;' and it would seem to be a somewhat similarly beneficent dispensation of Providence that Britain, which is denied the lavish luxuriance of nature enjoyed by the favoured nations of the South, should produce the best gardens and gardeners in the world. The British gardener has to fight against a wayward, depressing, and uncertain climate. He has to bring all the resources of horticultural science to his aid to enable him to contend successfully against the cold winds and unkindly skies, the damp fogs and dreary rainfall, which succeed one another in such rapid and variable alternation, that at no season of the year can he be sure of 'seasonable weather' for two consecutive days. But the very difficulties in his way have quickened his energy, and inspired him with a stubborn determination to overcome them. And he is encouraged by the high repute which his vocation enjoys.

There are few countries in the world in which the pleasures of the garden are more needed, and none in which they are more keenly appreciated, than in our own. And probably from the time the Romans first introduced gardening into Britain, its popularity was assured. One of the many reasons we have to be grateful to the old monks of the dark ages is that they assiduously cultivated the art of gardening, and spread the taste for this kindly art.

In one of his most delightful essays, Lord Bacon discourses 'Of Gardens,' and opens with this high eulogy of his subject: 'God Almighty first planted a garden, and indeed, it is the purest of human pleasure. It is the greatest refreshment to the spirits of man, without which buildings and palaces are but gross handiworks; and a man shall ever see that

when ages grow to Civility and Elegancy, men come to build stately, sooner than to garden finely, as if gardening were the greater perfection.'

And Abraham Cowley in his epistle to John Evelyn says: 'I never had any other desire so strong, and so like to covetousness as that one which I have had always, that I might be master at last of a small house and a large garden.' Milton, Pope, and Thomson were all enthusiastic lovers of gardens. Indeed, Byron used to say that he had a pride in thinking that our national taste, as it is conceived to be shown in what is called an English garden, had grown up less under the influence of our landscape-painters than under that of our descriptive poets, more especially Milton and Pope. Let us glance then for a moment at the history of the British garden, and the various phases through which it has passed before reaching its present stage.

In the essay on gardens to which we have already referred, Bacon gives us a picture of the *beau idéal* of a garden in his day. The principal and most noteworthy feature of the English garden then was the aim to make it perennial, a garden for all the months of the year, with something to please the eye in winter, spring, summer, and autumn—a source of perpetual refreshment and delight, from one end of the year to the other. And the great philosopher gives a list of all the plants and flowers suitable for each month, from January to December—a list which even your modern scientific Scotch gardener might do well to study.

A square garden, encompassed on all sides with a stately arched hedge, covering thirty acres of ground, divided into three parts; 'a green in the entrance, a heath or desert in the going-forth, and the maine garden in the midst, besides alleys on both sides,' that was Bacon's ideal. All elaborate trickery and device he despised, but he liked order, and system, and elegance. Above all, he made much of the *perfume of flowers*, a point on which, to our thinking, far too little stress is laid in the gardens of the present day. 'And because,' says he, 'the *breath of flowers* is far sweeter in the air (where it cometh and goeth like the warbling of musick) than in the hand; therefore nothing is more fit for that delight than to know what be the flowers and plants that doe best perfume the air.' And then he goes on to enumerate those sweet-smelling old English flowers, which, alas! modern fashion too often banishes to make room for the gaudy glare of 'bedding out.' So enamoured was Bacon of the perfume of flowers, that he was ready to go to any extravagance to secure it. He gravely recommended opening a turf or two in the garden alleys, and pouring therein a *bottle of claret* 'to re-create the sense of smelling, being no less grateful than beneficial!' On the whole, then, we gather that a garden in the Tudor style must have been most thoroughly what the old writers term 'a pleasaunce,' a place in which a man might take his pleasure, full of all that was bright in colour and sweet in perfume.

This was the old English garden which had its day from the reign of Henry VII. to nearly the close of Elizabeth's. It was during this

period that most of our common garden flowers were introduced from abroad. The oldest of them appears to be the lily, which was brought from Italy in 1460. Provence, Flanders, Italy, and the Netherlands seem to have simultaneously sent us our choice garden roses in 1522. From the Alps came the ranunculus, and from Italy the mignonette in 1528, rosemary from the south of Europe in 1534, the jasmine from Circassia about 1548. The year 1567 saw the introduction of four time-honoured favourites, the auricula from Switzerland, the pink from Italy, the gillyflower and carnation from Flanders. Spenser, by the way, in the *Shepherd's Calendar* (1579), classes the carnation, which he calls 'coronation,' with the purple columbine and the gillyflower as lovers' flowers. Now, the carnation is generally supposed to have derived its name from the *carnation* or *flesh* colour of the original species. But the word used by Spenser suggests that 'carnation' is merely an abbreviation of 'coronation' in allusion to the crown-like appearance of the flower, and its specific name, *Betonica coronaria*. The Philological Society's *New English Dictionary* does not decide which of the derivations is the only true one, though one must have originated in a mistake. Anyhow, the shorter form was common in Shakespeare's time, and we have it on Dame Quickly's authority that Sir John Falstaff 'could never abide carnation; 'twas a colour he never liked.' Lavender was imported from the south of Europe not later than 1568, and the laburnum from Hungary about 1576; while Sir Walter Raleigh is credited with having brought the snowdrop back with him from his short-lived colony of Roanoke, an island off North Carolina, in 1584.

But the old English style, towards the end of Elizabeth's reign, was superseded by the Italian. The Italians loved embellishment, and liked a mixture of architecture in their gardens. Statues, temples, alcoves, porticos, were combined with terraces, balustrades, flights of steps, alleys, broad paved walks, fountains, beds of flowering shrubs, thick walls of box and fern, secluded bowers, and grottos buried in the dense shade of over-arching trees. There are still examples of the Italian garden to be found up and down England. But in Charles II.'s time, this style, in its turn, was put out of fashion by the French, a style which may be tersely described as the Italian reduced to a system of mathematical precision. Everything was confined to rigidly geometrical forms—squares, straight lines, rhomboids, parallel-ograms—everything was measured out with the compass, and docked into uniformity with the shears. The gardens of Versailles still give some idea of the stiff ugliness which was the product of this style.

But the Dutch, with characteristic ingenuity, contrived to graft an even more hideous style on the outlines of the Italian. Nature was more sternly suppressed than ever. The rectangle was the Dutch *beau idéal* of shape, and the line of beauty was of rigid straightness. Fish-ponds took the place of fountains, and canals of terraces: the yew-trees were cut into the shapes of peacocks or monkeys, the box-trees into the figures of men or elephants. Of

course, when William of Orange came over, the Dutch fashion rose into the ascendant, and English gardens were laid out in strict imitation of the angular regularity of the flower-beds of Haarlem and the Hague. Traces of the Dutch style may still be seen at Hampton Court; and Sir William Temple has, in his *Essay on Gardening*, left us a minute and vivid picture of a model garden of this type, that of the Countess of Bedford at Moor Park, which he said was 'the perfectest figure of a garden, and the sweetest place' he had ever seen at home or abroad.

Thus, on the originally magnificent Italian style had been grafted the severe formality of the French, and the grotesque meanness of the Dutch. Artificiality had now been carried to its extreme, it could go no further, and then came the inevitable reaction.

It would be difficult to assign a precise date to this reaction; but we can trace the first symptoms of it in Addison's time. In his essay on the *Pleasures of the Imagination*, he notes how much less entertaining to the fancy, and how much less charming to the eye, are the neatness and elegance of English gardens than the artificial rudeness of the Italians with their mixture of garden and forest. And in a subsequent letter to the *Spectator*, he describes a homely, old-fashioned English garden of the style which prevailed before foreign tastes had become acclimatised here. 'A garden,' he tells us, 'altogether after the Pindaric manner, and run into the beautiful wildness of nature, without affecting the nicer elegance of art.'

It was, however, about the middle of the last century that this reaction in favour of nature reached its climax. But the Nature whom it then became fashionable to worship was a mere ideal goddess, evolved out of the emotional sentimentality of certain poets and philosophers. The first rule of the new school was in everything to go exactly contrary to their predecessors. Elaborate design had been the great object and main feature of the French and Dutch styles: elaborate absence of design was, therefore, adopted as the first principle of the new style. The most execrating minuteness was observed in copying the careless profusion and rude grandeur of nature. Poor Sir William Temple was bitterly ridiculed for his panegyric of the model garden of Moor Park. 'Caractacus' Mason in his dreary poem, *The English Garden*, Horace Walpole in his elegant *Essay on Gardening*, satirised unmercifully that faultless specimen of the prosaic Dutch style.

Hugh Miller has called William Shenstone the 'Prince of landscape-gardeners.' He became more celebrated for his gardening than his poetry, and carried out his whims and taste in gardening at the Leasowes, near Halesowen, Worcestershire. There was a mania for the picturesque, and Sir Uvedale Price and 'Capability' Brown had it all their own way for a time as the inaugurators of landscape-gardening. They prided themselves on being much more natural than Nature herself. There was no landscape, they held, which was not capable of being improved under their manipulation. A group of trees added here, an elaborately artificial 'natural' rock there, an accurately constructed ancient

ruin in one place, a cunningly devised impromptu waterfall in another, a vista here, a bowery retreat there—there was no end to the ‘improvements’ effected by the new landscape-gardeners. They inaugurated an age of shams and surprises, such as Thomas Love Peacock has so happily satirised in *Melincourt*. A tawdry, paltry, cockney imitation of nature became the rage. Horace Walpole made Strawberry Hill a perfect type of the new style, and he and those like him plumed themselves on their love of nature, while they were really patronising a grosser and more affected form of artificiality than their predecessors, who were the professed worshippers of art.

The new picturesque school made the ‘designless beauty’ of nature their model, and as an example of their fidelity to that model, we may take William Kent, the designer of Kensington Gardens, who the more effectually to conceal every vestige of a plan had some *dead trees* planted to give a natural appearance to the whole!

This mock-natural system became known as the ‘English style,’ though it is a moot-point whether it would not be more correct to term it the Chinese style; for the supposition is that the idea was derived from the Celestial Empire—the ‘Kingdom of Flowers,’ as the Chinese poets call it.

The Chinese were believed to have possessed great skill in landscape-gardening from a very early period, though, if we are to judge from the illustrations on the famous ‘willow pattern’ plates, there is some excuse for doubting the extent of that skill. It is true that a very ancient Chinese writer, Lieu-Tschou, has some extremely sensible remarks on the pleasures of a garden, in the course of which he says: ‘The art of laying out gardens consists, therefore, in contriving cheerfulness of prospect, luxuriance of growth, shade, retirement and repose, so that the rural aspect may produce an illusion. . . . Symmetry is wearisome, and a garden, where everything betrays constraint and art, becomes tedious and distasteful.’ But it was the letter rather than the spirit of Lieu-Tschou’s advice that his countrymen followed when they elected to patronise the ‘natural’ and the ‘picturesque,’ and they soon reached a stage of cockneyfied imitation of nature which Horace Walpole himself could not have surpassed.

In 1843, the Royal Horticultural Society sent out the eminent Scottish botanist, Robert Fortune, to visit these famous gardens of China—the land to which we owe the peony, the chrysanthemum, the azalea, and the camellia. He was enchanted by the magnificent azalea-clad mountains of Che-Kiang, one blaze of gorgeous bloom from foot to summit, but he saw little of the renowned landscape-gardens, though enough to show him that much that was fashionable in English gardening was merely a relapse into Chinese barbarism. Indeed, as a matter of fact, the hideous system of ‘bedding out,’ which has in recent years been so popular in this country, is simply a plagiarism from the Chinese. Those detestable cockney riband gardens, with their bands of red, yellow, and blue—a blaze of gorgeous but incongruous and inharmonious colour—are a slavish imitation of

Chinese taste—the taste to which we owe such artistic masterpieces as the ‘willow pattern’ and the illuminated tea-chest!

The truth is, that we are letting the ‘scientific gardener’ tyrannise over us now as previous generations allowed in turn the ‘picturesque,’ ‘the mock-natural,’ and the ‘pseudo-artistic’ gardeners to tyrannise over them. The costly exotics of the hothouse, which take prizes and bring kudos, are too often cultivated at the expense of the good old homely, hardy, British flowers, which in beauty and perfume yield to none. We are not unmindful of Cowper’s catholic sentiment:

Who loves a garden loves a greenhouse too.

But we would have the greenhouse play a much more subordinate part than it does. The glory of a garden is not, to our thinking, in its glass-houses but in its outdoor beds—in its smooth-shaven lawns, and trim terraces, and shady paths, bordered with sweet-smelling flowers, not striped with scentless gauds—in the refreshing fragrance and colour with which it gratifies the senses both of sight and smell. In fine, to come back to the point with which we started, if a garden is to fulfil its true purpose it should be not a show-place but a ‘pleasance.’

TO THE BLACKBIRD.

BIRD with the saffron bill,
Like close-furled crocus bud in early spring,
Thou makest all the bleak and dreary wold
Melodiously to ring.

Thy sanctuary gleams like burnished gold;
The thin larch copse that fronts the waning sun,
This is the haven that thy soul has won;
Its charms are manifold.

Warm on its banks the shortening sunbeams lie,
Its trembling spires are kindled into flames;
And see the pulsing planet that proclaims
The night fast drawing nigh.

There, where the shadows yet more closely cling,
Those fluent notes of thine are swift outrolled,
And the tired shepherd, leaning o’er his fold,
Lingers to hear thee sing.

The rill that babbles on its tortuous way,
Steals noiselessly along thy calm retreat,
And Night draws nearer with reluctant feet,
Fearing to hush thy lay.

The amber light fades out along the West,
And thou art silent; like a half-spent bolt
With dipping flight thou skir’st the quickening holt,
To seek thy new-built nest.

There thy fond mate awaits thee; there ere long,
With head close-tucked beneath thy ebony wing,
Thou’lt hide thy pipe of gold till dawn shall bring
The round world back to song.

ARTHUR WRIGHT.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 648.—VOL. XIII.

SATURDAY, MAY 30, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

WASTE.

We have most of us heard the rhyme—

Dearly beloved brethren, it really is a sin,
When you peel potatoes, to throw away the skin;
For the skins feed the pigs, and the pigs feed you,
Dearly beloved brethren, is not this quite true?

Though as a poetical effort this is hardly in the first rank, it teaches a more or less useful moral—namely, that everything has a use, if that use can only be found, and therefore nothing ought to be wasted, however trifling it may seem. But then, again, there are certain kinds of waste which are absolutely unavoidable—and this is particularly the case with that from the national coinage.

With reference to this, a somewhat curious experiment was made some time ago on London mud. An American scientist took samples of mud from various streets in the Metropolis, with a view to finding out how they differed in composition, and the analyses gave most interesting results. Mud taken from the busiest parts of the city showed in its composition quite an appreciable amount of gold and silver, besides copper, tin, iron, and other metals, with a fair proportion of fibrous animal matter, but very little vegetable fibre. In mud from the poor districts, however, where there was very little traffic, vehicular or otherwise, the most delicate tests failed to reveal even traces of gold, and showed but very minute quantities of silver. Indeed, metal of any sort was very scarce, with the exception of iron and copper; whilst the quantity of animal matter was a quarter of that contained in City mud. Curiously enough, however, the vegetable matter was present in quadrupled proportions.

Results such as these are liable to set one thinking. All this gold, silver, copper, iron, tin, &c., must of necessity be waste, and it comes from horse-shoes, tyres of carts, brass fittings, &c., which wear out on the streets. But horses are not shod with precious metals—neither do gold nor silver enter into the com-

position of carts and carriages. They can, therefore, only come from two sources—the wearing out of jewellery, and of the national coinage. Jewellery, however, does not wear much—a ring or a watch chain will not lose a grain in weight with five years' constant use—so that we may eliminate jewellery, and take it that it is the wearing out of the gold and silver currencies which makes true the saying that the streets of London city are paved with gold. If this be so, it is not unreasonable to suppose that gold and silver are spread in minute quantities all over the surface of this country, and so it might be interesting to know how much precious metal is worn from the currency daily, and spread over the land in an impalpable dust.

Statistics from the Royal Mint show that the average cost of renewing the silver coinage averages £31,000. This represents about six tons of silver, which are spread over the United Kingdom yearly. In other words, the daily unavoidable waste from the silver coinage is nearly £86 sterling.

Gold is not so much used as silver, but its waste in this way is sufficiently lamentable. The Mint issues, on an average, 4,645,521 sovereigns, and twice that number of half-sovereigns, yearly. The weight lost by fair wear and tear in the first is 0396 grains per annum, and in the second 0551 grains. Should any one care to work out this sum, he will find that this wear, if it could be collected and coined, would give sufficient gold to make sixteen sovereigns every day! Is it wonderful, therefore, that mud, taken from a part of London which has for centuries been the resort of moneyed men of business, should contain a certain quantity of the precious metals?

Yet the waste from the currency is quite insignificant when compared with that which takes place every day in eatables and drinkables. Take bread, for example. Roughly speaking, there are sixty million pounds of bread baked in Great Britain daily, and of this, at a very low computation, half an ounce per pound is

thrown away in crumbs, leavings, &c. Reduce this, and it will be seen that there are wasted every day one and three-quarter million pounds of bread, or enough to make nearly half a million quartern loaves, the value of which would be close upon ten thousand pounds.

Still greater, proportionally, is the waste in condiments. Mustard is wasted to the extent of fifty per cent.—that amount being generally left upon the edge of the consumer's plate, to be removed by the dish-washer, whilst that used for mustard plasters, though it could be, is never used more than once. To obtain absolutely correct figures respecting this relish is, of course, an impossibility, but the value of its diurnal waste is considerably over eighty pounds—taking it at a very moderate computation.

Vinegar, again, is thrown away in quantity—chiefly in the shape of pickle liquor. Thousands of gallons of this condiment are used every day in pickling, but not one person in a thousand ever uses this. It is thrown down the sink when all the solid matter has been extracted from the jar; whilst if it were kept and used, as it could be in nine cases out of ten, as vinegar, upon which it is an improvement, a matter of five hundred pounds or more might be saved daily.

Somewhat smaller is the sum which represents the sugar wasted by being left in the bottoms of teacups, and in sugar-basins as dust. Still, eighty pounds per diem is by no means a sum to be despised.

Salt is good—we have high authority for so saying—but were it as expensive as bread, and wasted to the same extent as that commodity, big fortunes would be wasted every day. As it is, the value of its diurnal waste is in the neighbourhood of a hundred pounds, for it is left on the edge of the plate, and otherwise wasted to even a greater extent than mustard.

A pair of utilities, if the expression may be allowed, which give excellent opportunities for waste, as everybody who keeps a housemaid knows to his cost, are coals and gas. England's output of the former is enormous, somewhere about 190 million tons annually, and the value of this is approximately 142 million pounds. At a low computation, half of this coal is used for firing purposes, and at least twenty per cent. of it is wasted in dust and cinders. It is, in all conscience, bad enough to watch the heaving overboard of tons of perfectly burnable cinders from an ocean liner, but this waste is more or less excusable, because speed is the great thing in these cases. But the housemaid who every morning throws into the dust-bin from five to ten pounds of good, solid, burnable coke, has no such excuse—it is sheer laziness, and carelessness of property not her own—and were the mistress to insist upon the cinder-sifter being used, she would find her coal-bill for the year reduced by at least twenty-five per cent., perhaps by more.

There are three distinct methods of wasting gas. The first and most usual is by turning on the jet without having a readily lighted match to apply to it. This wastes perhaps only a few cubic inches of gas; but these cubic inches multiplied by the several millions or hundreds of millions of gas jets which are nightly ignited

in this way, swell the amount of waste enormously for Great Britain. The second method is by having the gas turned on so fully that it flares. The idea is that a better light is thus obtained, but this is a mistake. If the jet be turned down until there is a clear and steady flame, there will be much more light, and considerably less gas burned. The third method of wasting gas is through a burner being alight when there is absolutely no necessity for it, and this, with the other methods, brings the nightly waste of gas in the United Kingdom up to about £500, four hundred and fifty of which might be saved.

Were potatoes peeled in a scientific manner—that is, scraped, they would afford at least five per cent. more nourishment than they do when peeled by the method which obtains with the modern cook, especially when it is taken into consideration that the most nourishing part of this tuber lies next the skin. The total consumption of potatoes for Great Britain reaches about 2000 pounds worth daily—five per cent. is wasted—that is, if the peelings mentioned above be thrown to the pigs, they would consume a hundred pounds worth of human nourishment every day.

A witty member of Parliament once said that the honest British workman had three characteristics which might be called the three 'B's,' these being 'beer, blasphemy, and baccy,' and these three B's afford two instructive examples of waste.

According to statistics, 138 million pounds are annually spent in drink in Great Britain. Say half of this is consumed in the country, and that is putting it low. Now everybody knows that when a glass of beer is drunk in one of those highly convenient establishments which are so largely patronised by the *élite* of the East End on bank holidays, and at other times, there is always a little, maybe only a few drops, or perhaps an inch of liquor left in the glass. This, with froth, drippings, and spillings, amounts to half a pint in the gallon for beer, and about an eighth of that for spirits. That is, over five per cent. of beer is wasted, and about six-eighths of one per cent. of spirits—the average being about three per cent. The whole sum, therefore, when worked out, shows that in the various 'wanities' consumed daily, there is a waste amounting in value to close on £6500.

Blasphemy not being a marketable commodity, it is impossible to put a monetary value upon the amount of it created daily, so we must pass to the third B—'baccy.' A French firm of cigarette paper manufacturers sends into England daily an average of two hundred gross books of a particular brand of cigarette paper, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that these are consumed—to say nothing of twenty or thirty other brands of papers, and made cigarettes. Now about a third of a cigarette is usually thrown away as 'butt.' We know that sixty papers go to a book, and about thirty self-made cigarettes go to the ounce, so that the amount of tobacco wasted daily in these luxuries can be approximated. About a thousand gross is the quantity of papers imported daily and smoked, and there are thrown away from these ninety-six thousand ounces of tobacco—equal in value to close upon

sixteen hundred pounds. Nor is this all, by any means, for cigar stumps and 'plugs' from pipes are not taken into consideration at all, nor the dust left at the bottom of the pouch, and which nine cigarette smokers out of ten will throw away. Add on all this, and the figure for the waste of tobacco comes to a million pounds yearly! perhaps more. This is vouched for by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, who, in his recent Budget speech, said that no less a sum than a million sterling was thrown into the gutter every year in the shape of unused cigar and cigarette ends. These figures may appear incredible, but it must be taken into consideration that the duty on tobacco is on the dry leaf as a rule, and that the prepared materials contain nearly thirty per cent. of water. It must also be remembered that smoking has now become so common amongst all classes, that one can almost paraphrase Horace's words, and say, 'Learned and unlearned, old and young, they all smoke tobacco.'

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

CHAPTER XX.—WHAT IS ON HIS MIND?

NEVER before, I am quite sure, was transformation more rapid than that which changed the Hon. Member for Shadwell, in less than six months, from a man out of the world to a man in the world. In April he came to my chambers and introduced himself: before the end of the season he was in the House, in a West-End Club, in Society. He had shown—well, signs of promise: he knew a good many people: he was listened to in the House: he wrote a paper in the *Vacation* about some branches of the Labour Question to the *Contemporary Review*: he also read a paper on some statistics before a learned society: he attended in August a Congress of working-men, and told them truths. I believe that he distributed prizes at a Sunday-school in his borough. In one way or another, the papers were continually talking about him. Now the first step in the noble art of getting on, is to keep your name well before the public: everybody understands that: you must make people talk about you: and since people's memories are most miserably short, you must do something else, very soon, to make them talk about you again. The effect of this forced familiarity is, that when the promotion comes, nobody is in the least astonished. I think, for my own part, that he was artfully and secretly managed all this time: I have my suspicions as to the person who pulled the strings. As for himself, he was incapable of *réclame*! The people who pulled the strings, and made him dance, and made the world talk about him, sat in the background or in the underground. Nobody knows what an enormous political cellarage there is!

This was his life: it changed him completely in six months. He was always a man of presence. He was now in appearance a gentleman of sixteen quarterings, at least: the aris-

tocracy of Castile could produce no scion of nobler figure. Any one, however, may have the appearance of a gentleman. Robert had acquired, in addition, something of the manner of one who has always lived with gentlefolk, so that their manners have become his own by a kind of instinct. I suppose he acquired these manners easily because he had so little to unlearn. A man who has lived alone among books can hardly have incurable habits. I do not say that he talked as a man of his age belonging to public school life, college life, or the army, would talk. No outsider can possibly acquire that manner of speech.

'Your cousin, George,' said Frances, 'reminds me of a certain courteous gentleman of Virginia whom I met some years ago. There was an old-world courtesy about him; he was a gentleman, but not of our stamp; he was conscious of his rank and manners; he thought very highly of both; and I should say that he lived among people very much unlike him. Robert reminds me of him. Nobody would deny that he is a man of fine, of rather studied manners; nobody would deny that he is a gentleman, yet not one of us. He is to spend a fortnight with me at Beau Séjour'—this was her country-house—in September. He grows apace, George.'

'He is a lucky man, Frances. You have taken him up, and advanced him.'

'He is more than lucky. Anybody may be lucky. He is strong.'

When the House rose, about the third week of August, and all the world went out of town, he came home to the house and the dockyard. I looked to see him fall back upon the old life, work in the yard all day, and sit in his study all the evening. He did nothing of the kind; he moved about restlessly, he came to the yard and looked at the work in progress but without interest; he received the ordinary business communications without interest: he had still a share in the house, but he behaved as if he no longer cared even to hear what was done. I suppose he had grown out of the work. Strange. Just as I was growing into it, feeling the sense of struggle and competition which gives its living interest to every form of trade.

One day he was sitting in the yard, looking out upon the river. The men had gone; it was past five o'clock. The day was cloudy, and a driving rain fell upon the river, which looked gray, and stormy, and threatening.

'This is a horrible place to live in,' he said abruptly. 'It is more horrible than it used to be.'

'Come, you lived in it yourself for a long time.'

'But I always knew that it was a horrible place; one couldn't help knowing that. I always intended to get away. Man! if I had known only a tenth part of the pleasures of that other life, I should have been devoured with the rage and fierceness of discontent. I say it is a horrible place—cribbed, cabined, and confined. With whom can you talk? With the Captain. And Isabel. George, how can you do it? How could you bring yourself to do it? You who know the other life. I don't understand it. You that knew that incompar-

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able woman. Why, now that I do know it, rather than leave it, I would go out and rob upon the highway.'

'You like that other life so much! Strange!'

'Why is it strange? It is the only life worth leading. You taught me to like it when you taught me what it meant. I should otherwise have been outside everything all my life.'

'I am not the only one who taught you, Robert.'

'No! there is Lady Frances. Well, I owe it you that I have learned what a woman may be. I owe it to you. How could I know before to what heights a woman could rise? Good heavens! How could I know?'

'Very little, truly. You remember, however, that you never gave yourself the trouble to inquire into the subject.'

'I had no chance. There is a woman! Clever, accomplished, full of resource, of gracious manners. Good heavens! George—and you could go away, leave her, and come down here.'

'Beautiful too, if you ever think about beauty,' I added calmly.

'I never do, when I am in her society.' He meant well, though the compliment was doubtful. He meant, I suppose, that the charm of her conversation was so great that he could think of nothing else.

'Some men think her extremely beautiful; I do myself. You may remember also that she is well born, and rich.'

'I would rather not remember those points,' he said shortly. 'I would rather not remember that there are any barriers between us.'

'Are good birth and fortune barriers? Not always. However, there is one barrier of your own making, Robert. She is sitting in the house over the way at this minute.'

He took up a handful of chips and began to throw them into the river one by one, with gloomy countenance. 'A barrier of your own making, Robert. I suppose you can unmake it if you like.'

'My word is passed.'

'You belong to society now, you much promoted person. When you marry, your wife must belong to society as well, or you will have to go out of it. Do you think that Isabel is ready to take her place in the world of society as well as—say—Lady Frances?'

Robert, to those who knew him, betrayed any strong emotion by the quick change in his face. It was disgust, plain disgust, which crossed his face when I put this question.

'Isabel,' I went on, relentlessly, 'is a girl with many graces.'

'I have never seen any,' he said.

'Of great beauty; of great delicacy of mind; sweet and gentle.'

'So is a doll.'

'You have never even tried to discover the soul of the girl whom you have promised to marry. I know her a great deal better than you.' That, at least, was quite true, yet not exactly as he thought. 'The point is, whether she has the training and the knowledge required by a great lady in society. And I am quite certain, Robert, that she has not.'

'My word is passed. But'—He threw all the rest of the chips into the stream and got

up. 'I am not going to marry yet awhile. Not for a very long while yet.'

'Well, but consider—is it right?'

'Does she want to marry somebody else, then? Let her speak to me if she does. And how can I talk of marrying yet?' he added irritably. 'Nobody knows better than you what my resources are, and I haven't got my foot upon the lowest round of the ladder yet.'

'Let Isabel go then.'

'I have passed my word.'

I said no more. It is always a pity to say too much. We went over the way and had tea.

The day after this conversation, he addressed his constituents, not defending or excusing his conduct in ceasing to be an Independent member, but giving them his reasons in a lordly and condescending manner, which I believe pleased these honest fellows much better than if he had fawned upon them. Who would not wish to be represented by a man who had opinions of his own rather than by one who pretended to accept the imaginary opinions of the mob? 'You fellows haven't got any opinions,' said Robert, standing on the platform. 'I have. You send me to represent my own opinions, which you know, and not yours, which you don't know. Opinions? How can fifty men be said to have an opinion? Well: you all hold certain opinions that belong to simple law and order. You know that politicians are necessary; you think that rich men get too rich; you sometimes think that there ought to be work and wages for everybody; some of you allow yourselves to think what is foolishness, that wages ought to be always going up. What is the good of such an opinion as that?' And so on, telling them very plainly that he thought nothing at all of their intellects. And they liked it.

After a week, during which we saw very little indeed of him, he went away again, with scant leave-taking. He carried away with him all his possessions—his books, his papers, and all; so that it was manifest that he meant to return no more. In fact he came again once and only once, as you shall hear.

'Has he said anything, Isabel?' I asked anxiously.

'Not a single word. I was horribly afraid that he would. Not one word.'

'It is wonderful,' I said, looking upon this sweet and lovely maiden. 'Well, Isabel, the day of redemption draweth nigh. Yet but a little while, and I shall knock the fetters from your feet, and you shall be free to fly—to soar—to scale the very heavens in the joy of your freedom.'

So we were left alone again, having the quiet house, so quiet when all the workmen had gone home, all to ourselves, with the Captain to take care of us. It was not an unhappy time, despite that betrothal which I fain would snap asunder; partly because we were together, and partly because I was certain that the promise must be broken as soon as Robert understood himself a little better. The evenings grew too short for more than a sail on the river; then too short for that: we spent them at home by ourselves. Isabel discovered that I could sing; or she played to me with a soft and sympathetic

touch, which made one dream things unutterable. On Saturday afternoons we went to picture-galleries, and to theatres and concerts—always somewhere. On Sunday morning, if it was fine, we went to St Paul's, or Westminster, or the Temple, where the voices are sweet and pure, and the singing is regulated. When it was wet, we went to St John's, our own parish church, and sat under the tablets of the Burnikels. I never really enjoyed family pride at the West End; here, on the spot, one felt every inch a Burnikel. We were like Paul and Virginia; and Paul was a most enviable person. I had brought my lathe from Piccadilly and set it up in the study, and Isabel would sit reading while I made the splinters fly. Or we read together; I read aloud while she worked; or she read aloud while I took a pipe. Or, best of all, she sat opposite me while I had that pipe and talked—talked of things pure, and sweet, and heavenly, insomuch that the heart of one who heard glowed within; at such time I loved to turn the lamp low so that the sweet face of my mistress might be lit and coloured by the red fire in the grate, or the lamp in the street.

It was for his sake, in order to advise him, that Frances continued to live in town till the end of August, and when she went down to her country-house, he went too as one of the party.

'Robert,' she wrote, 'is staying here. He does not go out with the men shooting. I suppose that he cannot shoot. He works in the library: he has brought some books of his own here: he is writing a little series of three letters for the *Times* on one of his own subjects. He has read them to me first: I find them admirably expressed and models of good sense. He grows every day, George: his head will one day touch the skies. He still lacks the one grace that will complete his oratory if he arrives at it—the grace of lightness. He can be light and humorous on occasion, but his general tone is serious. It is a seriousness which sits well upon a young man, because in this age of badinage and cynicism, no one is serious, except Robert himself, who looks as serious as a Dean. There is also something on his mind. I do not suppose it is the want of money, because you told me something about his affairs: and I believe that he has a few hundreds. It is not disappointment, because no young man has ever got on so well in so short a time since the days of Pitt. I think he will be Pitt the Third. In that case, you will see him in the Cabinet in four or five years at the outside. It is not that he feels himself out of his element in this country-house, which is, I suppose, rather a finer house than the one you have at Wapping. Nothing dazzles him: neither wealth, nor troops of servants, nor titles, nor women in grand frocks, nor diamonds. What then is the matter with him? If he were another kind of man he would long since have got himself sent away by making love to me. As you know, George, I am always sending them away for this very sufficient cause. But this man does not make love. What is on his mind? You who know him may be able to advise upon this subject. The symptoms are a tendency to

the gathering of a sudden cloud upon the face; a disposition of the mind to wander away, out of sight, so to speak; a sudden looking forth of the eyes into space. He is thinking of something disagreeable. It cannot be his past, because he is no more ashamed of having been a boat-builder than you are of becoming one: though what is honest self-respect in one case, is disgraceful abandonment of caste in the other. What can it be? I suspect—nay, I am sure—that there is some woman in the case. Has he early in youth made a fool of himself with an unworthy woman? Has he trammelled himself? Is he, perchance, a married man, and married to Awfulness and Terribleness? Oh! the having to marry such women! I am very much concerned upon this point, George. Let me know about it, if you can. Don't try to screen him if he wants any screening. I think so much of him, I tell you beforehand, that I would forgive him if I could. Only there are some things which must not be forgiven.

'I am not going to stay here after October, when I shall return to town, and to dear delightful politics, and to you, my dear George, if you can tear yourself from your abominable chips and come to see me. Have you developed more callosities on your hands?—F.'

What was on Robert's mind? Well, I think I could tell her. But should I? Would it be best to tell her?

(To be continued.)

CARPETS OF CORK AND OIL.

At first sight, cork and linseed-oil seem most unlikely materials for making carpets, yet no less than twelve million yards of linoleum, consisting almost entirely of these substances, are produced every year. At a recent meeting of the Society of Chemical Industry, a most interesting paper on the manufacture of linoleum was read by Mr Walter F. Reid, F.C.S. The industry is almost entirely British, and has only been in existence for about thirty years. The first step towards linoleum was the 'cere-cloth,' made of linen or canvas, coated with wax, used principally as a wrapping for dead bodies. This practice is very ancient, and was employed extensively by the Egyptians in preserving their dead. Even to this day, oil cloth is called *wachstuch* in Germany, and *toile cérée* in France. Although there is considerable dispute as to when oil was first employed in painting, there is no doubt that it was used in this country as early as the reign of Henry III., for the account-rolls in the archives mention painter's oil, which at the end of the thirteenth century was worth a shilling a gallon. Certainly it was employed all over Europe towards the end of the fourteenth century. In his paper, Mr Reid quoted, from the account of a foreigner travelling in England in the fifteenth century, who described the way artists went to work in those days. The canvas was laid upon the floor, and the colours were applied to it in that position. The

traveller takes special note of the fact that the English painters were in the habit of *keeping their feet clean*. Mr Reid suggests that to this habit of keeping our feet clean, the invention of linoleum may be due. The first use of cloth treated with linseed-oil was for wall coverings and for windows, for in 1636 a patent was granted for 'painting with oyle cullors upon woollen cloath, kerseys, and stuffles, being pper for hanging, and alsoe with the said cullors upon silk for windowes.' The next step was the invention of kamptulicon, which consisted essentially of powdered cork, embedded in india-rubber. This prepared the way for linoleum, which was invented about 1860 by Mr F. Walton. The industry has grown enormously since then, and the material is becoming very popular.

Considering that linseed-oil serves the same purpose in oil-painting and in making linoleum, and that cork has always been plentiful enough, it seems strange that linoleum was not thought of before 1860. This is the way with all our great inventions; they appear so very obvious when once they have been worked out. The idea may, and does occur to many people, but it is the mechanical and chemical skill that renders the utilisation of the idea possible. Although linseed is the actual oil employed, any other drying oil would serve the same purpose. A 'drying' oil possesses the remarkable property of being converted by the oxygen of the air into a stringy, elastic substance, somewhat resembling india-rubber. When employed for painting, the oil, on 'drying,' forms a cement which protects the colours from the air, and forms a water and air proof covering for the wood or canvas on which it is painted. Many oils possess drying properties in a greater or less degree; the principal ones in addition to linseed are poppy-seed, cotton-seed, hemp-seed, and nut oils. The addition of 'driers,' composed of compounds of lead, not only makes the oil dry more quickly, but renders the process more complete in the end. The linseed-oil to be used for the manufacture of linoleum is first allowed to settle, and is then boiled with the addition of driers. The next step is very curious to witness. The oil is pumped to the top of a building and allowed to flow down slowly over pieces of light cotton cloth about twenty-five feet long, suspended vertically from iron bars. The building is heated to blood temperature, and the layers of oil take about twenty-four hours to dry. As soon as one layer is dry, another film of oil is run over it, and this goes on for six or eight weeks until the thickness of dried oil amounts to half an inch. The 'skins' are then cut down and ground between rollers. Sometimes the oil is dried in bulk. The raw oil is run into a cylinder provided with rotating arms, which beat the oil into spray, so that

the drying only takes twenty-four hours, instead of several months; but the product is not considered so satisfactory as that dried naturally. The next step is to mix the ground oil with resin and kauri gum, that curious fossil resin that is found in New Zealand.

All this time machines have been hard at work pulverising the cork. Of all the difficult substances to cut, cork is one of the worst. It is so elastic that pressing on it with a heavy knife has no effect, whilst it takes the edge off the hardest steel almost immediately. Knives used in cutting cork require to be sharpened after every two or three cuts. The cork-breaker in most general use consists of a number of very strong circular saws, rotating close to steel bars, the ends of which are toothed in an opposite direction to the saws. Before reaching the breaker, the cork is passed over a deep sieve which is made to move rapidly backwards and forwards. The dust and dirt fall through the meshes, whilst the cork passes over the top; stones, pieces of metal, &c., remaining on the sieve itself. The cork is principally the waste from the factories where bottle-corks are made. Most of the cork now comes from Algeria, where there are large forests of the cork oak, and the exports from Spain and Portugal have diminished considerably. The ground cork leaves the breaker in fine powder, and is very dangerous to handle. The material is so light that it easily becomes suspended in the air, producing a highly explosive mixture. It would be safer to take a naked light into a powder-magazine than into the building where the cork is ground. All lights are carefully guarded, but in spite of every precaution, explosions are sometimes started by sparks from the machinery. Unfortunately, no means have yet been found for removing the dark patches from the cork. Everybody must have noticed these dark streaks, which consist almost entirely of tannin. They rot comparatively quickly, whilst the rest of the cork is quite sound; and if some means could be found for eliminating this dark portion, the linoleum would wear much longer.

The powdered cork is now mixed with the oil and resin cement. After a preliminary rough mixing, the compound is passed into a gigantic sausage-machine, where the materials are incorporated thoroughly. The raw linoleum, as it issues from the spout, bears a close resemblance to German sausages, and for this reason the machine goes by the name of the 'German.' The lumps of linoleum as they leave the 'German' are passed through rollers, which convert the material into sheets. These are scraped off the rollers, and the substance is then rolled on to a backing of jute canvas. Instead of canvas, wire-gauze is sometimes used, and this material embedded in india-rubber is being employed for making linoleum stair-carpets.

The linoleum made by rolling the material on to the canvas in this simple way is, of course, quite plain, and of the well-known reddish-brown colour. For producing the elaborate patterns that we see displayed in the furniture shops, very ingenious machinery has been invented. The simplest and most obvious way to obtain a pattern on the linoleum is to paint a design on the finished material in oil-colours,

but the objection to this is that the pattern soon wears through. The next method, also fairly obvious, is to run different coloured linoleums on to the backing, side by side, so that as they are carried along by the canvas, a striped material is produced. The effect, however, is not particularly pleasing, and the public taste demands something more artistic than stripes.

One way to produce variegated patterns going right through the linoleum is to use stencils. The canvas, faced with ordinary linoleum, travels along a horizontal table, and metal stencil-plates of the same width as the fabric are lowered upon the canvas. The spaces in each plate correspond to the colour that is to occupy that particular portion, and the granulated, coloured linoleum is deposited on the plate, and brushed through the openings. The plate travels a short distance with the fabric, and then returns to its starting-point, ready to be lowered again, the patches of granulated linoleum being consolidated by hot rollers. Another way for producing a mosaic pattern is to spread the linoleum on a table, and to bring down upon it a grid, the divisions of which correspond to the outline of the pattern. Dies are then pressed on the divisions which are to retain that particular colour, and when the grid is lifted, only those that have been compressed remain in full. The operation is then repeated with linoleum of another colour, and so on until all the divisions of the grid are occupied. The tesserae or little tile-like pieces are then discharged from the grid by plungers, and consolidated by pressure. Where outlines are required between the tesserae, a stencil is used to cover up the little tiles, and granulated linoleum is brushed into the spaces between them. Yet another method is employed by Mr Walton, in which cylinders covered with knives, arranged according to the pattern, cut pieces out of a sheet of linoleum; these pieces being afterwards consolidated together.

Inlaid linoleums, as they are called, although possessing many advantages, have serious drawbacks as well. They contain so much pigment that they are not so elastic as the ordinary variety, and the compositions of the different coloured portions is so varied that they wear unevenly. Besides that, the pieces that are consolidated after being cut out from a sheet, do not form such a homogeneous mass as the granulated linoleum. Many pleasing and interesting examples of inlaid linoleum, however, were exhibited at the Society of Chemical Industry. All linoleum becomes brittle after a time. This is due not to any change in the cork, but to further oxidation of the cement. It is probable that improvements will be introduced before very long which will obviate this difficulty. The use of the stencil for producing a design going right through the linoleum seems likely to be the most fruitful in artistic results. As the Japanese have shown us, most beautiful and varied results can be produced in this manner. Plain linoleum is by no means inartistic, but has the drawback of showing marks very readily. If iron is placed on wet linoleum it leaves a black mark. This is more noticeable in the brown than in the red variety, and is produced by the tannin in the cork combining

with the iron to form ink. As regards the advantages of linoleum, it is very clean, damp and draught proof, durable, and comparatively inexpensive.

THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF JOHN PERCIVAL.

CHAPTER V.—CONCLUSION.

WHEN John returned to his rooms, carrying his strange spoils with him, he found on his table an invitation. For the last week or two, his invitations had been few. This one had been delivered, his landlady told him, by a man and horse from Wamphrey, which was some miles off to the south of Duntrum. This was so startling in the midst of his present thoughts, that his spoils fell from his hands in the excitement of the moment. To Wamphrey! Mr Wamphrey was an invalid, the brother was absent. There had been no festivities there since his arrival in Duntrum, and that such an invitation should come now when he was about, he thought, to disclose the family skeleton, and brand its most beloved member with guilt, startled him as if there was something preternatural in it. He threw himself down in his easy-chair and tried to think, but his head went round and round.

The objects which he had carried in his hands fell on the table, and unrolled themselves as inanimate things sometimes do, as if there was life in them. They had been tightly done up, and fluttered out of the roll as they fell; the white handkerchief, folded like a bandage which had been tied together at the ends, and retained even something of the roundness of the head on which it had been bound, fell quite open, revealing its use. The larger black one had also been tied, two of the ends together. She had got rid of them on the first possible moment, trusting no doubt to the thick Spanish lace of her veil, with its large silken flowers, to disguise her sufficiently; but where did she go from that little shelter in the field—how had she escaped eventually, in the dark midnight, over the slippery, wet ground—so dark you could not see your hand held up before you, so wet and soft, your foot sinking into the clay?

John sat by his fire, and asked himself why he had been so hot in this discovery, and what he had wanted to do. Did he want to convict her, to bring her to shame, a girl who had done him no harm, who (he said to himself) had, after all, done nobody any harm; except perhaps the bank, which was impersonal and could not suffer much. It was true that it would not do to establish a precedent, and rob his Majesty's mails, when they happened to contain something disagreeable to you. But then, there were very few people in the world who would have the nerve and the strength to do that; and indeed, when you came to think, it was as much the carelessness of the guard putting such a temptation in the way, as the boldness of the culprit which was to blame. If he had not left them within everybody's reach, she would not have attempted to get them. The guilt was with the guard. Then, if he himself had kept awake and

not gone to sleep like a great baby, she would not have done it. Did he wish he had not gone to sleep? Did he wish the guard had not been so careless? Did he wish that the family should have been disgraced, and the prodigal ruined? John caught himself up with a start. What did it matter who was ruined? No one not with the purest motives, not with the most tender meaning, had a right to take the law in his or her hands. She had made herself amenable to the law—and not only so, but the position was untenable from any point of fact; it was a crime, it struck at the roots of every security. She was a thief! a thief! and of the most dangerous kind.

Suppose it had come into her head that somebody's diamonds would make a nice little portion for her brother, the prodigal whom his own family was sending away to the ends of the earth? Would that motive have saved her from the law which has to deal with a criminal and not with the crime, certainly not with the circumstances that account for the crime? He replied to himself indignantly, that there was no analogy in that case to this. To steal diamonds is common theft, to steal a mail-bag—well! That is a worse crime: and yet he could not endure to have it said even by himself. If Grizel Cochrane, who stopped her father's death-warrant so as to give him time to escape, was the heroine of the district, how was Marion Wamphrey to be called a thief? He went on reasoning with himself, wandering through the wilds of casuistry, examining, accusing, vanquishing himself over and over, and then beginning again.

Nevertheless, when he went to Wamphrey, ten days after, there were war and battle in John's eyes. He was given, as it happened, a very cordial welcome. Mr Wamphrey, the invalid, was down-stairs, seated in an easy-chair in his library, where he could take a quiet share in the amusement of the large party; and it turned out, as it so often turns out, especially in Scotland, that he had known John's father in their respective youths, which was a thing John himself had not done, having been an orphan as long as he could remember. And the elder son had come home from his travels, the object of which John was secretly aware of; but chiefly there was Marion, in the delightful position of daughter of the house, supreme everywhere—disposing of everybody, a princess at the head of her dominions. She was quite gracious to John, treating him with a sort of amused *empressment*, a smile of triumph on her face, as if to show him how little she feared him. Her manner drove John back into a conviction of the falsehood of all his sophistries, and that this bright creature was nothing more or less than the robber of his Majesty's mails, and had to be brought to justice. He was not even moved as he had been before by the thought of those little white shoes stumbling over the muddy field. This had subdued him utterly when she was not there. He could not even remember that orange skin which had appealed to him as the subtlest argument. Her smile of triumph seemed to turn his head—but the wrong way.

She had kept a dance conspicuously for him.

She was evidently intent on proving that she did not fear him. She herself proposed, after it was over, to lead him to the farthest corner of the conservatory, to show him a rare flower of which the gardener was proud: but it was there in this position of favour that John was so hard-hearted as to fire his first gun.

'I have something of yours, Miss Wamphrey, which I must take the first opportunity of returning to you,' he said.

'Something of mine? How can that be, Mr Percival? I am sure I never gave you anything of mine.'

'Or rather there are two things: a white handkerchief marked with your name, and a black handkerchief, both of which you wore round your head on a certain occasion when we first met.'

'Mr Percival,' she said, with a change of colour, 'do you think it is good taste to assail me whenever you happen to be alone with me, with this ridiculous delusion of yours?'

'They are still precisely as they were when you must have pulled them off: you know where I found them—thrust in among the roots of the rowan-trees in that little hollow under the brae. There was another thing,' said John, 'the skin of an orange.' . . .

When he said there was another thing, her eyes blazed up in sudden anxiety—then they were dimmed with as sudden a shadow of relief. She had feared something else: therefore there must be something else to find there. And then her colour came back, and she laughed out, 'The skin of an orange! Oh, she understood perfectly what he meant! That was always what led him on. She understood every allusion. 'That was a very innocent thing,' she said; 'I would like to know how you associate me with that.'

'It gave me a kind of pleasure to see it,' said John; 'I thought to myself I was some good to her after all.'

She paused, too, for a moment, casting down her eyes, and then she said: 'I cannot really stand any longer listening to your nonsense about pocket-handkerchiefs and orange skins. I hope you yourself know what you mean. I hope you have not—lost your head altogether. I don't want to be rude and leave you—but this is more than I shall ever give you the chance of saying to me again. Mr Percival, the next dance has begun.'

'Is that all you have to say?' asked John.

'Every word—and too much!' she said.

I don't know what he had expected, or indeed what he meant at all by assailing her so bluntly, but he certainly did not make anything by it; she assumed her air of relieved triumph, but held him at arm's length all the rest of the evening; and he did not dance at all, but stood in a doorway and followed her with his eyes—always seeming to see that triumphant head, flower-crowned, issuing from the bandages, and the white shoes stumbling over the muddy grass.

'What are you glowering at?' said Maxwell, taking him by the arm. 'Mind, I warned you—no interference with me.'

'I interfere! You had better think twice before you take any step,' John said.

Then it was Maxwell's turn to glower at him.

'I hope you are not taking leave of your senses,' he said.

These two drove home together, very silent, Maxwell in great wrath at such an extraordinary warning, John consumed with a desire to betray to him the secret of Marion. He could scarcely open his lips for fear it should burst forth. A dozen times at least he had framed the words. She is not what you think. There is something I could tell. I could put her in jail if I pleased. This last came most frequently of all. I could put her—in jail. He said it actually under his breath. He repeated it over a dozen times. He could not understand why his companion did not hear him. He seemed to himself to have another motive in speaking from that which anybody would imagine. It was not to expose Marion but to test Maxwell. He thought if the fellow knew as much as he knew, he would give her up at once: and with all his soul, he wanted to put this other man to the test. I don't know how it was that the secret was kept, nor did John know. He thought it was chiefly the noise of the post-chaise.

Next day, John was very restless and excited, unable to keep quiet or to go on with his work. He had taken his hat two or three times to go out, but then reflected that to go during the day would be to call forth suspicion, and perhaps give some other person of a detective cast of mind a clue to the mystery. He was not at all himself of the detective mind, and, indeed, the thing was not known, and certainly not prized in those days. A thief-catcher it would have been called, and 'Set a thief to catch a thief' was the suggestion which everybody thought of in that connection. But he went out in the afternoon, walking sedately over the high-standing hill, and reaching the foot just as the evening began to darken. He made his way again with the same shuffling and sliding over the muddy field, and reaching the little declivity behind the rowan-trees, began his investigation. The roots were so tangled and twisted, so loosely filled up with earth and stones, that but for the clayey consistence of the soil, and the damp that penetrated through and through, he would have feared to bring the entire mound about his ears. It took him a long time, and the evening grew darker and darker, and he had almost ceased to hope for any further revelation, when suddenly the stick with which he was digging, struck upon something which gave forth a metallic sound. With a sort of fury he rushed at it again, and struggling with a shower of falling stones, and the stem of one young tree which fell upon his arm, jamming it against the side, he at last managed to extract a large article, partly metallic, which was deeply lodged among the roots of the trees. He could scarcely make out its shape in the darkness, but half by sight and half by feeling it with his hands, made sure, with a sensation which brought the blood rushing to his heart, that it was the mail-bag. He had scarcely quieted down after this discovery, when looking up from his extraordinary treasure-trove he was aware of another figure coming towards him, so near already that he

could make out it was a woman, and guess what woman it was. He started back into the shadow of the outlying edge, where he was absolutely invisible, and stood there, a spectator of the eagerness with which she advanced to the spot which he had found such difficulty in discovering, where these things had been hid. She had not even a stick, but tore at the roots and earth with her hands, plunging her arm in up to the elbow into the hole which John had made. It was now almost entirely dark, and probably she thought this was the reason she found nothing, for suddenly, before he knew what was being done, she had begun to work with one of the elaborate methods of the time for striking a light. John stood breathless, invisible, yet so near to her that he felt her panting breath, while holding his own, quite unprepared for what was to come next, not knowing what to do. He held the thing for which she was searching, he held her secret, her freedom almost, her life in his hands. Her fingers trembled, it took her a long time to strike that light—it seemed incredible to him that she was not aware at least that there was some one by.

Then suddenly the little flame awoke, and to him for a moment the whole strange little scene became visible. The light leaped up upon her face, pale with anxiety and alarm, and upon the background of the rugged bank, her gloves muddy and stained with the damp earth, a quiver in her person—though even then she was not aware of him for a moment, being so deeply absorbed in her search. Then she lit a piece of candle which she had taken from her pocket and held it to the crevice; but John was no longer able to restrain himself. He touched her sleeve softly with his hand. With a great start and subdued cry, kept down at that dreadful moment by a fear still greater than her fright, she let fall the light. She had not divined who he was—or she was of sufficient power to pretend so. She said hurriedly: 'I was looking for something I had lost: perhaps you'll help me—I'll—I'll pay you.' Her voice went out as her light had done, dropping in the dark, but leaving an impression of trembling and quivering in the air. Her terror was very real: she thought she had disturbed a tramp or beggar taking refuge in this solitary place.

'This is it, no doubt,' said John, putting the bag into her hand: this time the cry of terror was not to be repressed—and yet there was a relief in the sound: of the two, her enemy, who was a gentleman, was safer to meet in a lonely place in the dark than a tramp. 'It is you!' she cried—'you!' her teeth chattering with the fright and the cold.

'Who should it be,' said John, 'but I, Miss Wamphrey? I saw by your look there was something more here, and I came to find it. Did you expect anything else?'

She was not able to reply. He felt that she made a strong effort to regain her composure, but could not, being beyond speech. The entire darkness seemed to palpitate with her trembling. It seemed to him as if he, too, quivered with it, standing by her side. He had put the bag into her hands, but it fell out of them upon the damp ground at their feet. He put out his

hand, and gathered both of hers, which did not seem to have any strength to resist, into his hold.

'Compose yourself,' he said, 'compose yourself! It was better that I should find it than another. For God's sake, be calm! I will do you no harm.'

She had not the strength to draw her hands from his now: she was thankful for the supporting of his grip. 'I—I know what it means,' she said, gasping painfully, 'I—know what it means: I am prepared—to pay the penalty. I know that I am in your hands'—

'I think you will find them safe hands,' said John. He drew her arm through his. 'Come,' he said, 'take courage. I don't think you have ever quailed before.'

'Mr Percival,' she said, recovering her utterance a little, 'why are you my enemy? I am not your enemy—nor any one's. It did no one any harm'—

'Except the law and the bank'—he said.

'The bank—was it for the bank?' Her tone changed: her fears came back: she drew herself away. 'If that is so'—

'No,' he said, 'it was not for the bank? It was for you. I think two can keep a secret better than one, Miss Marion. And you ate my orange, you know.'

'It saved my life, I think,' she said, with a sudden low burst of hysterical laughter; and then recovering, she put her hands imploringly upon his arm. 'What are you going to do with me? Oh, have mercy upon me! What are you going to do with me?' she said.

'If you will let me, I should like to marry you, Marion,' he said.

A few days after, it happened that John was entertaining young Maxwell and a few more in his rooms, as it appeared that he was returning sooner than he had intended to Edinburgh. There was some talk among them of the great adventure which had accompanied his arrival, and they fell into discussion on the subject, what the motives of the guilty person could be, and whether it was really a woman, and what had become of her. 'It would be droll if you ever recognised that woman you saw, Percival,' said one of the young men. John acknowledged that it would be droll, though probably she had nothing to do with it: and he asked the advice of his assembled friends as to what, in such a singular case, a man should do, and various suggestions were made, which did not perhaps throw much light on the subject. They were by no means at one as to whether they would denounce her or not, always supposing it was a woman. 'Not if she is bonnie,' one said, and on the whole this was the general judgment. 'If she turns out to be old and ugly, with her head bound up, and all the rest of it, give her up—like a shot' (though, by the way, they did not say like a shot—the slang of their day was different). 'But if she is bonnie, nothing of the kind.' John went on to suggest other difficulties. What if she should be met with in Society? What if some fellow you knew was going to marry her? This made them all ponder. 'What should you do, Maxwell, if such a thing were told you of a woman you were in love with?'

'I can't contemplate the possibility,' said Maxwell with a laugh. 'By George! but it would be a ticklish position, though,' said one of the others. 'Awfully hard upon Percival, still more hard on the other fellow.' 'I would never mind if I were fond of her,' said one. 'I should mind awfully,' said another. (Be it here observed that the use of the word *awful* is not slang, but the Scottish language.) 'You might mind, or you might not mind,' said Maxwell oracularly, 'but none of us would make a woman who had done such a thing our wife.' He had not the least idea that he delivered his friend's heart from a great weight when he said these words. 'So then I am no traitor even to him,' John said to himself.

It was felt at Percival's Bank in Edinburgh, that though to marry so young might be foolish, there was not a word to be said against Miss Wamphrey of Wamphrey, and that it was a piece of good fortune that the young ass should have fallen on his feet, and made such a good connection. Marion had the opportunity, of which she availed herself quite pleasantly, of refusing Maxwell shortly after, and in spring her marriage took place. There was some story of their having fallen in love with each other over the eating of an orange, people said: and very soon after his marriage, John Percival had the satisfaction of remitting a sum of money from his brother-in-law, Will Wamphrey, in New Zealand, to the bank manager at Dunscore.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE construction of the first mountain railway in Britain, that from Llanberis to the summit of Snowdon, is an engineering feat which should not pass without notice, although its opening was marked by a deplorable accident, which will, we fear, for a time interfere with its popularity. The length of the line is nearly five miles, with three equidistant passing places, besides the two terminal stations. The system adopted is a modification of the Abt system, and the railway is modelled upon the Swiss mountain lines, and is almost a counterpart of the Rothhorn railway. The permanent way is all of steel, both rails and sleepers, the gauge being only 31½ inches. The route followed is that of the familiar footpath from Llanberis, but diversions are made in places for the convenience of the engineers, as well as with the object of improving the view. The lamentable accident which marred the opening of this interesting line would not have resulted in any fatality had all the passengers kept their heads, and it at least has demonstrated that the brake-power is sufficient to provide for all contingencies. There is no reason why the Snowdon railway should not prove as flourishing a concern as its prototypes in Switzerland.

The marking of foreign meat so that the consumer shall not pay for the frozen article at the same rate as for home-grown mutton and beef seems to be fraught with difficulties,

and the arguments for and against the measure are so varied that those not in the trade cannot easily follow them. What seems to us one of the best solutions of the matter is embodied in a suggestion offered by a correspondent of the *Times*, which is as follows: 'No carcass of any sheep or lamb imported into the United Kingdom in a frozen state, or as fresh meat, or slaughtered at the Foreign Animals Lairages, and no carcass of any cattle imported under similar conditions shall pass into the open meat markets with the trotters, head, hoofs, or any portion of the skin or hide attached thereto.' Such an enactment would not be difficult of enforcement, and it would enable the consumer to see at a glance what he was buying. At present, the sale of foreign meat for British is notorious, and it is a fraud upon the home grower as well as upon the retail buyer.

Inventive talent is not always hereditary, but it seems to be so in the case of the Bessemers. Anthony Bessemer, for some time connected with the English Mint, was author of many useful inventions. His youngest son, Sir Henry Bessemer, who still survives at a ripe old age, discovered the direct and cheap method for making steel from crude iron, which bears his name, and which has been followed by the Siemens open-hearth process; both have proved amongst the most widely beneficial inventions of this century. Steel has been so cheapened that it is used for many purposes for which iron was previously used, such as steel rails, girders for bridges, and carriage tyres. A process which occupied nearly ten days is accomplished in a very brief period, while the price of steel has been reduced from about £50 to £5 or £6 per ton, and the world's annual production of Bessemer steel amounts to between eighty and ninety millions sterling.

A grandson of Sir Henry's, Mr A. G. Bessemer of 27 Killieser Avenue, Streatham Hill, London, has patented a very ingenious method for rescuing persons from dwelling-houses when on fire, and has published an account of his combined fire-alarm and life-saving apparatus. In spite of fire-brigades and fire-escapes there are an alarming number of preventable deaths by fire every year, the larger proportion of which might be avoided were some such simple system as that of Bessemer's adopted. The method is based upon the idea of allowing persons in a tenement, hemmed in by fire, a means of escape, through a direct passage, by a door of communication into the house adjoining. A fire-proof structure is embedded in the wall, which is only to be opened in case of fire. The opening is fifteen inches above the level of the floor, is three feet three inches in height, by one foot three inches wide. Into this opening is inserted the iron frame or box, containing an arrangement of steel plates, combined with a fire-resisting and bad conductor of heat, such as asbestos. There are double steel doors on each side, and each householder can open his own door only, but no one person can open both doors. This cannot be done without co-operation of persons on opposite sides of the wall. But this is provided against by the ringing of an alarm loud enough to awaken the whole tenement. In houses so provided, dwellers may sleep securely, as, if an exit is cut off by

stair or roof, there still remains this door-way through the wall.

'The digestion of an ostrich' is proverbial, but we do not remember having ever before seen such a remarkable proof of the appositeness of the reference as is furnished by a certain inventory drawn up by a New York taxidermist, into whose hands came the carcass of one of these birds for dissection. The ostrich belonged to Barnum & Bailey's menagerie, and had formed part of the Exhibition in the Central Park. In its stomach were found the following articles: The bottoms of two beer bottles; a wooden clothes-peg; a mouth-harmonica, five inches long and two wide; the ferule of an umbrella, with four inches of stick attached to it; a metal skate key; a door key, five inches in length; a woman's hair-comb; two pieces of coal; a silk handkerchief; three stones; together with a mass of cabbage, grass, and dirt which served to fill up the gaps. Strange to say, this strange assortment of food had nothing whatever to do with the death of the bird. It died of another kind of consumption—tuberculosis.

Colonel F. Spratt recently read a paper before the Camera Club, London, on 'Elephant-hunting in the Nepal Terrai,' illustrating his remarks by photographs which were taken with a hand-camera from the back of an elephant. Colonel Spratt is one of very few Europeans who have had an opportunity of joining in this magnificent and dangerous form of sport. The enterprise is organised for the amusement of the Maharajah, and takes place only once in about four years, else the forest would be denuded of the big game. A small army, consisting of about five thousand men, and perhaps three hundred elephants, and a few horses, take part in the hunt, and they carry tents and provisions just as if a campaign against a powerful enemy were in progress. When the pad marks of an elephant are found, he is steadily tracked down, and as soon as he is found, a trained fighter of his own species is urged against him. As a rule, he steadily retreats upon sight of his pursuers, and their object is to press him so as to tire him out. He then stands at bay, and the tug-of-war commences. The opposing animals butt at one another with the heads down, and should one show his flank, he is quickly brought to earth. When finally conquered, the wild elephant is pressed by his pursuers towards water, of which he is so much in need after his exertions that his hind-legs can be shackled as he drinks. He is then kept attached by ropes to other elephants until he gradually gets accustomed to bondage, and in a few months he is completely under control. The sport is a bloodless one, and the elephants when captured are most kindly treated.

Much has lately been heard about the electric furnace, and the wonderful new products which it is placing at the service of mankind, but very few have had an opportunity of seeing the apparatus in action. Much interest was therefore excited when Professor Dewar showed the furnace at work at the Royal Institution in his opening lecture upon the Advances of Modern Chemistry. The furnace consists of the familiar carbon rods as used in the electric arc light—only they are surrounded with fireclay, and

the upper one dips into the crucible in which substances under fusion are placed. Perhaps the most interesting thing shown was the production of calcium carbide. The furnace being fully aglow, small charges of lime and carbon were fed into the crucible, and after a time the product—calcium carbide—was exhibited. This dull, black mass, when dropped in water, gives off acetylene gas, which burns, as already noted in our columns, with a luminosity eight times that of the best coal-gas.

The Secretary of the Electric Construction Company points out in a letter to the *Times* how our manufacturing industry, as well as the farming interest in this country, is suffering from the legal obstructions which exist to the development of transport by electric traction and horseless vehicles. If our engineers had free scope for their inventive faculties, instead of being bound by the provisions of the Locomotive Acts, we should now be carrying a volume of traffic on our highways by mechanical means, at a cheaper rate, and with far less wear and tear than with horses. We took the lead in the development of railways, but now that a new order of things is coming about, we are letting foreigners step in to secure a monopoly. Germany and America are providing plant not only for South Africa, but for England and Ireland. The advantages of this new form of traction are many. The vehicles occupy a smaller area than carriages with horses; with rubber tyres the wear of the roads is reduced to a minimum; there is no noise, smoke, ashes, or droppings, and they are more effectively controlled than ordinary horse carriages. The limitations at present placed on the development of what promises to be a lucrative industry, call for immediate legislation.

Mushroom cultivation in France is a very important industry, no fewer than sixty wholesale firms in Paris alone devoting themselves exclusively to the sale of this delicious vegetable production. In the latest issue of the United States Consular reports, are four from Naples, Bordeaux, Marseilles, and Paris, dealing with the entire industry, the first-named report giving the most details. In the Department of the Seine there are said to be more than 3000 caves, principally exhausted stone quarries, connected with the upper earth by rope-ladders, in which mushrooms are grown. In these caves live about 300 people, who attend to the cultivation, and rarely see daylight. The conditions for successful culture seem to be a cool and even temperature, absence of light, or at least of sunshine, a current of air in one direction—preferably from north to south—and change of soil when a bed is exhausted, that is, after about three months' yield. If these and other precautions be adopted, a continuous supply of mushrooms can be confidently reckoned upon throughout the year.

In a recent lecture upon 'Water-power and its Application,' Professor Capper of King's College pointed out that at the present time the greater part of our industrial activity was dependent upon coal for its motive-power. The supply of this fuel—which owed its origin to the power of the sun in past ages—was by no means unlimited, and the exhaustion of our coalfields not quite so remote as some might think. A

very valuable substitute for coal was water, the stored-up energy of which we also owed to the power of the sun, for by the action of the sun the evaporated moisture from the earth and seas rose in the atmosphere, and was afterwards condensed as rain, which was continually flowing from the hills into the lower lands. If the force of the rivers thus fed could only be utilised, the whole of the motive-power required for our industries would be provided. There were three ways in which water-power could be made available for use. First, the weight of water might be made to turn a wheel in the familiar water-mill fashion; secondly, by means of the hydraulic ram, or piston; thirdly, by using a vertical tube, from the bottom of which the compressed fluid could be urged in a jet against the vanes of a paddle-wheel. It was this last device which was adopted at Niagara, and if the whole of the force generated by that mighty waterfall could be made available, about 10 million horse-power would be at disposal—sufficient to drive 500 Atlantic liners continually at the rate of 20 knots per hour.

It was stated at the annual meeting of the members of the National Sea-fisheries Protection Association, that during 1894 the amount of fish landed in the United Kingdom was larger than in any previous year, the money value of the fish being nearly seven millions sterling. But the increase was not derived from the home fisheries, but from the increasing proportion of the fish-supply from around Iceland. The bill introduced last year for putting a stop to the destruction of immature flat-fish unfortunately did not pass, but a similar bill would be introduced by the Government which would deal with the subject. Belgium and Denmark had already legislated in this direction, and we should certainly not be behind in a matter which was of international importance.

The great importance of the Röntgen method of obtaining photographs of the inner structures of the body has been evidenced by several examples which have recently been brought under our notice. In one case a little child in crawling about the room was heard to occasionally scream without any apparent cause. Examination revealed a slight swelling in the leg, and a doctor suggested that there might be a needle there. The child's leg was placed under a Crookes tube, and on a photographic plate, with the result that a needle was plainly shown, and promptly removed. In another case, disease of one of the bones of the forearm was indicated, but the extent of the mischief was not known until revealed by one of these strange Röntgen pictures. It was then found that while one bone was entire, the other was perforated in several places. The doctors, indeed, were able to find out as much about the case as if the diseased bone had been laid bare. These cases were shown to us at Faraday House, London, where a complete X-ray plant has been established for the benefit of doctors and their patients.

Any one who wishes to study English History in a most entertaining way is recommended to take the first opportunity of visiting the newly opened National Portrait Gallery at Charing Cross, London. Here can be seen the counter-

feit presentments of all who have made history for the last few centuries, including great soldiers and sailors, statesmen, painters, doctors, besides many whose lives have not been of so creditable a kind. In addition to the pictures there is a collection of effigies—mostly of kings and queens—which have been copied by the electrotype process from statues and busts which are for the most part dispersed among our cathedrals and abbeys. The effigy room is really one of the most interesting features of the new gallery, and an inspection of it would alone repay the trouble of a visit to it.

Yet another use has been found for the ubiquitous Photographic Camera by Mr Mallock, who has found it a most useful agent in determining whether the lines of a building are vertical, or whether they have from any cause ceased to be so. It is true that such a question can be solved in other ways; but such methods are tedious, and involve both trouble and expense. Mr Mallock's plan is simple in the extreme. He places his camera on a horizontal board, and in front of the lens he arranges a small tank of glycerine and water, which forms an artificial horizon. By this means, the building, whose verticality has to be tested, is photographed together with its reflection in the tank, as in a looking-glass, and every deviation from the perpendicular can afterwards be detected on the negative produced by means of a micrometer scale; a true vertical being obtained for comparison by a stretched silk fibre across the plate. Mr Mallock recently lectured upon this new application of photography, and showed various examples. In one picture, taken at Westminster, it appeared that the clock-tower was slightly out of line, while the much older abbey, and St Margaret's Church, were as true as when they left the builder's hands.

When Professor Graham Bell showed, nearly twenty years ago, that actual speech could be carried from one distant point to another by means of a communicating wire, he aroused the wonder of the civilised world; but for a long time our postal authorities regarded this invention as a mere toy, and treated it with lofty disdain. When, however, a company put his system into practice, the Post-office saw that it threatened their revenue, and obtained a judgment from the courts declaring that the telephone was a telegraph, and that those using it infringed the Government monopoly. Since that time, the telephone has been worked under Government license. A new order of things will now prevail, for the Government have bought the telephone trunk-lines—that is, the wires which connect one town with another—and the result of this arrangement will be, that presently the public will have many benefits in the way of quick communication placed at their disposal. Each post-office will have its call office, connected with the existing exchanges, so that correspondents may communicate with one another for a small fee. A subscriber to the exchange will have the additional advantage of summoning from the nearest post-office a boy to carry express letters or parcels, or he can speak a message to the office, which will then be transmitted as an ordinary tele-

gram. The amount of business already transacted in our large towns by telephone is enormous, and will be greatly extended when the new system comes into play.

A MIDNIGHT ATTACK.

By the Author of *The Rising of the Brass Men*.

BEHIND the Colonies and Protectorates of Great Britain and France, which extend in a broken line along the West African coast, from the mouth of the Gambia to the Niger, lies a wild and little known region of swamp and forest, where but few white men have ever set their foot, inhabited by many Negro races, differing widely in physique and language from one another. For the last three years, strange stories have been brought down to the seaboard about the doings of an Arab chief, called Samory. The latter, at the head of a large following of desperate men, outcasts from many tribes, Mandingoes, Jalufs, Sofas, Senegalis, and deserters from both British and French native troops, has made his name a terror throughout this 'Hinterland,' sacking villages, and carrying away the inhabitants into the far Soudan.

During 1893 he raided the eastern portion of Senegal, and the French lost a number of white officers in the hard fighting necessary to drive him out. More than once, too, they were badly beaten, for their assailants were armed with high-class rifles, smuggled through from the coast, in spite of certain clauses in the treaty of Brussels.

If the reports of native traders from the interior are to be credited, Samory has been busy during the last twelve months, and has fought many battles with inland chiefs far to the north. Exactly where he may be at present is not known, even to the European Frontier officers, who are by no means anxious for his reappearance.

However that may be, in the latter part of 1893 this Arab leader induced the Sofas, a warlike tribe, dwelling in a debatable land between the small British colony of Sierra Leone, and the French territory of Senegal, to take up arms against the Europeans; and quite unknown to each other, a British and a French expedition marched from different points to attack him.

One afternoon, at the end of December in that year, a small British force, comprising detachments of black Mohammedan Haussas of the Frontier Constabulary, and Negroes of the West India Regiment from Sierra Leone, stumbled through the dense forests of the Conno country. The day had been intensely hot, for this is the dry season in West Africa. From every foul lagoon and sluggish river, which lay shimmering in the fierce sunlight, sickening exhalations rose into the tainted air; while as the long, hot hours wore away, and evening approached, a white steam-like mist covered the surface of the damp, hot earth.

The tired troops dragged themselves painfully along, with a company of Krooboy bearers ahead, slashing a pathway for them through almost impenetrable thickets, beneath the wide-spreading arms of acacias, baobabs, and lofty

cottonwoods; or floundered amid the mangrove roots, in peril of disappearing altogether in the slime, as they forded the numerous forest creeks. At sunset they reached a small clear space, surrounding a deserted village, and there, at the word of command, the worn-out men were glad to pile their arms, and prepare to camp.

A rough breastwork of brushwood was soon arranged in a hollow square, and throwing themselves down on the moist earth, amid the crimson shoots of trailing plants, and flowers of many hues, the soldiers spread their simple meal; the tall Haussas in their crimson fez and dark rifle uniform separating themselves from the men of the West India Regiment, for the latter profess a debased form of Christianity mixed with black practices, and the true Mussulman will not, if he can help it, eat with the infidel.

By-and-by the light grew fainter and fainter amid the trees, and then died out altogether. The moon swung slowly westward and the stars shone down out of a sky of deep indigo with an intense clearness, for in the tropics the eye realises the immensity of distance between each of these twinkling points of fire, which stand out so sharply, one behind another, in a kind of stereoscopic focussing through an endless perspective of space.

The colonel's tent shone through the damp bushes like a big Chinese lantern. Inside, the light of a swinging hurricane lamp fell on the thin yellow faces of the white officers, seated round a strip of palm netting, on which were spread sundry tins of provisions, and the inevitable whisky and Sauerbruner. The mark of 'the coast' was on them all; the wasted figure and listless air which unmistakably stamps most European dwellers in the feverish West African littoral.

An hour or two was passed in spiritless chat, for a long march through a tropical forest sickens both mind and body. Then, posting sentinels, and leaving one white officer on guard, the rest rolled themselves in their blankets, and went securely to sleep, for according to native reports, Samory and his raiders were still far distant.

The young West India lieutenant on guard leaned against the great buttress-shaped roots of a cottonwood, and as he mopped the perspiration from his brow, and fought the blood-thirsty mosquitoes with both hands, said wicked things about the fate that led him into 'this distressful country.' He was an Irishman, and when he abused things in general, as Frontier officers occasionally do, the powerful eloquence of the Celtic tongue relieved his feelings best. From time to time he looked out into the darkness, but there was little to be seen; the shadow of the trees closed round the camp like a wall, and no sound other than the usual night voices of the African forest broke the stillness. From a hidden creek came the floundering and splashing of an alligator; at times the branches of the cottonwoods rattled, as a monkey swung himself from bough to bough; or the rustling of grasses marked the passage of a huge snake.

The white man at last found the spell of the forest, which at times will cause a panic even

among the natives, though no one knows why, creeping over him. His hands trembled as he settled the chin-strap of his pith helmet. 'Pah! how this night-watching gets on one's nerves,' he said; 'it shows what the climate will bring a man to. Even the "drip, drip" of the water there is enough to drive me mad—— Hallo!' He sprang back, with a hand on his revolver butt, as a dark figure rose up out of the bushes beside him.

'Sergeant Amun Sah,' said a tall Hausa, saluting; 'think there be Sofa man in the bush; monkey frightened live for go away, leopard live for go away too.'

The lieutenant listened, while the veins tightened across his forehead, and something seemed to click beneath his right ear: and sure enough a rustling amid the trees announced the passage of a troop of monkeys, while the long howl of a leopard drifted down the night breeze.

A few moments later, all doubt vanished, for a snapping of twigs and swishing of leaves told that a large body of men were advancing through the forest.

At the report of the lieutenant's revolver, the camp awoke, and for a few moments, while the bugles rang out the alarm, there was a scene of wild confusion. Men still half asleep stumbled over one another towards the stockade; officers ran here and there with sharp words of command, while the Hausa sergeants effectually aroused any laggards with the rifle butt. If the soldier was a West Indian, the hint was even more vigorous. Then out of chaos came forth order. Lines of men knelt beneath the brushwood screen, supporting their rifle barrels on the branches against the downward drag of the bayonet, while the colonel moved coolly up and down, revolver in hand, and saw that all was ready.

Just in time, for an outburst of howls and yells rose on the night air; a crackling blaze of rifle fire ran round the bush, and while the bullets sang overhead, or ripped through the leafy screen, a swarm of dark figures dashed across the open space towards the camp.

'Fire volleys by half-companies,' shouted the colonel, as his heart bounded and the blood surged through his body.

'No. 1 Haussas—fire,' the voice of the Constabulary captain sounded clear and distinct, and a blaze of light burst from one side of the stockade, while the crashing report of a volley rang out through the darkness. Before the sound had died away, a West India lieutenant, farther off in the gloom, re-echoed the command, 'A Comp'ny—fire!' and a sheet of flame blew along the two ends of the square.

Before the almost simultaneous discharge, the front of the attacking force melted away. Men lay writhing amid the wet leaves, or crawled on hands and knees through the bush; but the Mussulman, with visions of black-eyed hours and the tree of Sedrat before his eyes, has little fear of death, so with loud yells the foe spread out, and at full speed made for the breastwork.

'Independent firing—commence!' roared the colonel, and after captain and lieutenants repeated the order, the Haussas, who, used to Frontier

warfare from childhood, think themselves marksmen, took snapshots at the flitting figures, but did little harm beyond clipping clusters of leaves from overhanging cottonwoods. Meantime the West Indians, who are accustomed to drill in battalions, and fancy they are quite equal to white infantry, after a desultory shot or two, stood silent with bayonets at guard. Next moment the assailants swept at the defence, only to be met by a glistening wall of steel, and for a short space both sides were locked in a deadly struggle, the officers working their revolvers until the barrels were hot, while the troops fired as fast as they could thrust in the cartridges. Nothing human could face the murderous rifle blast, and in a few seconds the foe broke away and fled to the bush.

For a while, the smoke hung heavily over the camp on the damp air, then slowly melted away, and as the colonel recovered his breath he felt his wrist burned by the back spitting of his heated revolver.

'That was sharp work, lieutenant!' he said to the young officer of the West Indians. 'We shall have breathing time now, and then they will come back. How have your men come out of it?'

'At least two dead, sir, and more wounded; but the Haussas got it worse than we did,' was the answer, as the colonel passed along the line.

An hour went by, minute following minute, slowly—very slowly, as the shadows of the cottonwoods crept across the clearing, for the moon was sinking behind the Western forests. The shimmering silver patches on the grass narrowed and shortened, but still much of the camp lay bright and clear in the light. Here and there a wounded Hausa moaned faintly as he struggled to repress a cry that would have been unworthy of a believer in the Prophet, while the West Indian, who possesses neither the resignation of the Christian, nor the heathen's contempt of death, groaned over his hurts, or hurled horrible curses at the heads of the invisible foe.

'Silence, men!' said their lieutenant sternly, while the Constabulary captain smiled as he remarked: 'Those fellows of yours are good to fight, but they have not the stamina of mine. The moonlight's going; still if these brutes come back, they could pick us off man by man, if they were only able to hit anything; as it is, we shall get it hot; the woods are full of them.' Then he grasped the shoulder of his friend, and thrust him forward into the shadow, as a line of flame burst out of the bush, and a flight of bullets passed over the heads of the crouching men.

Without waiting for the word, No. 1 Company of the West Indians fired a volley, but as the smoke wreaths blew in the men's faces, a mocking yell from the forest told that it had done no harm, while with a rattle the troops turned over the Sniders to shake out the empty shells.

'Independent firing—commence!' the officers shouted, and the men, crouching beneath the frail defence of the breastwork, fired at the flash of their assailants' pieces, with probably little result, for the forest was dark, while the line of branches which defended the British front

was clear and distinct, and the blue barrels glinted in the moonlight. From behind every cottonwood root and wide baobab trunk bright gleams shot out. Every now and then a soldier dropped his rifle with a clatter, and collapsed, a moaning heap, amid the wet undergrowth, until the men's hearts grew sick as they realised how they were at their opponents' mercy, and they longed for the dawn, when they should meet their skulking foe face to face.

It was one thing, the West Indians thought, to stand back to back, and face any odds in the open; but to see a comrade by one's side loosen his grasp on his weapon and roll over, tearing at the leaves, or lie still, and cough away his life's-blood, and be able to do nothing but be still and bear it, was a very different matter. So the men fidgeted and muttered until the colonel realised that if this kind of thing went on much longer, they would be beyond all control.

While the officers, with smoke-grimed faces, and dried-up throats, walked up and down the line, exposing themselves recklessly to the desultory firing to encourage their men, there was a stirring in the forest, and presently, in grim silence and spread well out, the foe rushed towards the camp.

'Steady, men—steady—wait a little!' roared the colonel, as with overstrained nerves a few of the soldiers pulled their triggers, and the bullets tore up the grass harmlessly a few yards ahead.

'A Company, fire—ready No. 2!' shouted the lieutenants, but the men were now past all control. They had their comrades' blood to avenge, and shouted and yelled as they thrust cartridge after cartridge into the chamber as fast as they could turn the Sniders over. The fever of the fight was on them, for now they felt their time had come after the weary waiting.

'Meet them with the bayonet!'—the colonel hardly knew his own voice, it sounded so hoarse and cracked—then he gasped, 'Good heavens! what was that?' for above the rattle of the riflery the words 'Courage, mes braves!' rang out sharp and clear through the smoke.

Dropping his smoking revolver, he sprang among his men, shouting 'Cease fire!' but the hammering of the Sniders drowned his voice, and the acrid smoke choked him, and he stood in silent horror and watched the fight. It did not last long. The swarm of savages had not nerve to rush upon the unbroken line of flashing bayonets—they turned and fled from the impregnable breastwork. Then came the turn of the defenders, and with hoarse shouts the West Indians leapt over the brushwood, and with dripping bayonets drove the foe through the forest.

The colonel sat down with his back to a tree, a horrible fear in his heart, and longed for the dawn as he had never longed for anything in his life. Fortunately, there was not long to wait, for the suspense was deadly. The shadowy palm fronds sharpened into shape; a soft gray light, growing rapidly clearer, filtered through the overhanging branches, and a broad crimson streak appeared over the forest; then morning came suddenly, as it always does in the tropics. The colonel looked round; the enemy had gone, leaving only dead and wounded, but his first care was to see after his own men.

Three white officers and a sergeant-major of the West Indias had fallen at their posts, with faces towards the foe. Six privates were killed, and a score badly wounded, and the colonel groaned, as with dry lips and contracted brow he recognised the pity of it, and the uselessness of this waste of life; for there was worse to come.

The bright sun-rays fell on the scene of the fight, and the gloomy forest-clearing became at once a place of warmth and light; but the space in front of the square was dotted every here and there with a rigid, motionless figure, and the surrounding bushes were full of wounded men. For a few moments the officer hardly dared go forward and examine the slain, and when at last he slipped over the breast-work, and stood over the quiet dead, the sight was what he expected—they were not Sofas.

Many were naked savages, auxiliaries only, but ten of the chief assailants lay there with distorted features, clad in the uniform of the French Senegalais. The colonel wondered who would be called to account for this night's work; but the crowning horror of the whole affair was reached when four Haussas carried in a white officer, and laid him on the dewy grass, coughing up gulps of blood.

He smiled as an Englishman raised his head, and he saw the pitying faces bent over him, for the defenders had already solved the riddle; then gasped, 'Hélas, mes amis!' and swooned away.

A few drops of spirit were poured down his throat, and then after a while the eyes reopened and he murmured the story, how, deceived by a native chief Koronah, he supposed the British force to be Sofas, and did not find out the mistake until too late.

'There—there, that will do, don't fret yourself; it's a ghastly thing, but it can't be helped—take another drink and go to sleep,' said the surgeon. The Frenchman swallowed a mouthful of the liquor, then his speech wandered, and his eyes grew hazy. 'Poor fellow,' said an English officer, 'it's a gone case, but we must do what we can for him; take him to the tent, sergeant.'

It would have been an instructive lesson to the coloured editors of the Sierra Leone journals, who are fond of declaiming against 'the dissolute soldiery,' to have seen an Englishman seated by the side of his late foe, moistening the black parched lips from time to time, and wiping the perspiration from the hot forehead. The commanding officer came round occasionally, and the last time the younger man raised his hand for silence, 'Hush, he's coming to,' he said. The white lids opened, and a faint smile shone in the tired eyes as the wounded officer raised his head; he stretched out a cold hand, which felt like ice when the Englishman took it.

'Adieu, mes amis—je vous souhaite un meilleur sort,' he gasped, then broke off and choked; a stream of dark blood stained his white uniform, and he sank back, dead.

This mistake, caused intentionally by the treachery of Koronah, who was duly hanged for it afterwards, cost the lives of four officers, who could be but badly spared, besides numerous privates and auxiliaries, and forms one of the dark pages in our West African history. Yet although the details seldom reach the ears

of Englishmen at home, the deeds of our Frontier officers, amid the dreary swamps and forests of the debatable land, where our colonies about on the wilderness beyond, are such that the nation has cause to be proud of them.

By hidden ambush, facing savage foes, or stepping calmly, man after man, into a dead comrade's place, so that the disease-stricken station may not be left for a single day, district commissioner and soldier daily lay down their lives. When we hear of eleven officers dying, one after another, at the same post in nine months, and yet none hesitated to go; and of three men holding 800 savages at bay through a long night, it is not hard to realise that the West African legion of honour is a long one, and that the supremacy of Great Britain in that fever-haunted littoral is dearly bought with British blood.

WAITING.

GOLDEN Summer and glowing wood
And shining leaves o'erhead,
Mazes of verdure and blossom
And fair green moss to tread.

Who should be gayer than I?—but no,
I wait and my heart is sore,
Listen and wait for a bird to sing
That sang in the wood before.

What though the rich air quiver,
The waters sparkle along,
What though the cushat is cooing,
I am waiting for that one song.

Waiting and listening and longing,
Summer is shining in vain,
Waiting and listening and longing
For the song of that bird again.

But I know that if one bright presence
Adown the pathway drew near,
That bird on the instant were singing,
The whole of my world were here.

T. P. JOHNSTON.

The July issue of *Chambers's Journal* will contain the opening chapters of a New Novel, entitled

A LOCAL VIEW.

By P. L. M'DERMOTT,

Author of *The Last King of Yeuile*, &c.

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Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 649.—VOL. XIII.

SATURDAY, JUNE 6, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

A LOCAL VIEW.

By P. L. M'DERMOTT,

AUTHOR OF 'A BOYCOTTED BABY;' 'THE LAST KING OF YEWLE,' &c.

CHAPTER I.—THE VICAR.

CROWNLEY was a new suburb which might be said to have grown up around the church of St John the Evangelist. This is the reverse of the usual order of things; but when the church was built, fifteen years ago, in the fields outside the considerable town of Croham, it was chiefly intended for the interests of a neighbouring working population in the outskirts of the town. The owner of the estate on which the church was erected granted an excellent and spacious site, also contributing liberally towards the cost of construction of church and vicarage and school. The liberality was amply repaid when the speculative builder came into the fields; and the result was that within fifteen years Crownley became an important and prosperous parish.

The vicar, the Rev. Frank Dalton, was a chief factor in the creation of the parish. A bachelor and a man of means, he freely devoted his private resources to his church and its ministrations during the early years of the parochial existence. His proprietary interest in the church and its belongings was not less than the feeling of affection with which he was regarded by his flock. These were neither, as a rule, very well off nor within reach of want, and the average house valuation of the parish might be stated at between forty and fifty pounds a year. Crownley was a comfortable suburb, and neighbourly and social relations were generally very harmonious. Between eight and nine every morning the adult male population of Crownley departed, newspaper in hand, by train to London, and by seven in the evening they were all back again. During the day their wives and families were

understood to be looked after by the vicar and the doctor.

Full of loving-kindness for all persons, the good bachelor-vicar sometimes distrusted the steadfastness of his own charity in regard to just one man in his parish. This man was Mr Seth Farnley, a solicitor, a man who had spent many years in deep waters, and had reaped much from the ruin of others. Business that is lawful must be classed as legitimate, though there is a wide moral difference at times between the two things. Mr Seth Farnley kept within the law; but during a connection of many years with joint-stock companies, building-societies, and like enterprises, depending on the confidence of investors, he had done many things not wholly consistent with the principles of the Ten Commandments. It is in the nature of such a business that while Mr Seth Farnley always had command of plenty of money, he would have found it hard to determine, at any given time, how much he was actually worth—great gains in speculative enterprises being commonly balanced by great risks, and sometimes great losses.

The vicar was afraid of this man, because he knew him to be dangerous and unscrupulous—not afraid in the sense of personal fear (for Mr Farnley could not touch him), but with that instinctive shrinking with which a very bad man inspires a very good one. There was another reason for Mr Dalton's feeling. His presence in the parish as vicar had been a surprise to Farnley when the latter bought a house in Crownley. Seth Farnley had believed Mr Frank Dalton to be a missionary in India or China.

We must pass briefly over the early relations between the two men. The Rev. Frank Dalton had had a younger brother, to whom he had been bound by strong ties of affection, and the two brothers had lost their hearts to the same maiden. The younger never knew that he was the other's rival, and, so finely did the elder conceal it, the girl herself hardly more than suspected the fact. In time the couple were married, and the elder brother went abroad as a missionary. In five years the young husband died, broken-hearted by financial ruin, leaving wife and child unprovided for. Then Frank Dalton flew back to England, and reverently took on himself the charge of the young widow and orphan. The ruin and death of the younger brother—a hard-working, earnest, and high-hearted man—had been caused by the failure of a bank, in the affairs of which Mr Farmley had been prominently concerned. Some were punished, many suffered and were ruined, but the supple lawyer escaped to follow his profession elsewhere.

To enable him to provide a home for his brother's widow and child, Frank Dalton accepted the charge of the embryo parish. But good deeds have their reward, sometimes even in this world. A wifeless and childless business man between whom and death the missionary had interposed himself in Calcutta, and over whom, whilst in India, Dalton's gentle character had exercised unbounded sway, sank into depression when he left, and from depression into the habits from which he had been withdrawn. In six months the unhappy man was dead; and he testified his gratitude to Frank Dalton by bequeathing to him all that he possessed. The possession of thirty thousand pounds was to Frank Dalton's mind too small a matter to make any change in himself. But it enabled him to improve the circumstances of the widow and her little girl; and from that time to the present they had lived in a pretty and commodious house on the south side of a hill at the further end of the parish from the church and vicarage.

By a sinister fate, the evil influence that had ruined the father had almost, fifteen years later, blighted the life of the daughter. Seth Farmley had a son of twenty-three, whose feminine face looked more like eighteen—a petted and pampered offshoot of a bad stem, the gentleness of whose manners, the sweetness of whose voice and aspect imposed even upon those whom he repelled by his want of physical manliness. If men despised him or laughed at him, many women did otherwise, and few women could wholly resist the pleasant and insinuating deference of his attentions to them. But when the Rev. Frank Dalton heard for the first time that this young man was throwing the glamour of his fascinations over the innocent eyes of his niece, Mary Dalton, he was almost stunned. Discreetly, without revealing his alarm, the vicar sounded the girl's mother concerning the relations of the two, and found much cause to fear that the danger was real. The poignancy of the discovery was made more keen by the suspicion that Seth Farmley encouraged his son to press his suit on the girl for

the sake of her uncle's money, which all the world believed would be hers.

What the vicar might have done, or attempted to do, in these trying circumstances, there is no need to inquire. An event altogether unexpected, and as sudden as unexpected, put an end to his anxieties. Mr Freddie Farmley packed off to South Africa in pursuit, as he professed, of gold claims. Hundreds were doing this, and the fever caught him also. No one in Crownley was particularly sorry for his departure, though he was missed for a while in many places. For a week or two Seth Farmley (who had no other offspring, and was a widower) looked depressed and vexed; but he was too busy a man to have spare time for domestic troubles, and too practical to regard his son's escapade from a sentimental point of view.

'Young blood will have its way,' he declared philosophically. 'Two or three years sowing wild oats will send Master Freddie home again sadder and wiser than he went!'

The vicar uttered many a silent prayer of thankfulness for the deliverance, but he held his tongue. Pretty Mary Dalton never suspected the fear that had lately shaken her uncle's life; probably, in her innocence, she was unconscious of the cause of his fear. But he was kinder to her than ever now, and in the course of two months took her to more concerts in London, and gave her more presents (including a substantial increase in her pocket-money allowance) than ever before. Nor had he ever wanted her so often at the vicarage, or indulged her in so much liberty in putting things in order in his study and elsewhere. Old Mrs Atkins and her daughter (who constituted the 'establishment') had never found their master so patient and tolerant in respect of the changing of window-curtains and the dusting of carpets.

It was not only the removal of Freddie Farmley that made the vicar happy. A hope that had lain near his heart for two years past was now in prospect of being realised. Mary was just past her twentieth birthday. He had intended her to be older still before allowing her to marry; but the danger she had just escaped made him change his mind. The sooner she was now safe, the better. In his own mind, as has been hinted, the vicar had already marked the man who seemed most after his heart for the position of Mary's husband.

This man was a young Scotch doctor, who had settled in Crownley three years back, and whose winning personality and devotion to the duties of his profession had already acquired for him a practice not limited to the parish in which he resided. Mr Dalton never needed a doctor himself, but, as an educated bachelor in a suburb whose society was not intellectual, he soon grew to be more than partial to the companionship of the doctor in the spare hours of the evening. The contact of Dr Maitland's fresh northern zeal for research revived the academic interests of the vicar, and the personal character of the young man inspired his warm nature with a feeling akin to affection. The dream of uniting his pretty niece to this young man soon took hold of his imagination, and had young Farmley not come in the way, there was probably no obstacle to the easy and natural

realisation of his dream. Maitland was a frequent visitor at Mrs Dalton's house, for that lady was not strong, and his presence was always as welcome there as at the parsonage. It could hardly have happened that a man of his age and taste should resist the attraction of Mary Dalton's charms, nor did it happen. But she was very young, and Maitland put a wise restraint upon the interest excited by her youth and innocence. The time would come, and he could wait. It has been seen how nearly his reticence had been fatal to his hopes.

The same feeling of reverence for her youth dominated him still, the more so as the danger was past, and he had no knowledge of the altered views of the vicar. The frequency of her presence at the vicarage also threw her more than ever into his society. He was still the same as before—that rare and fine character of man to whom maidens instinctively give their confidence without fear. Such lovers are often cut out by less worthy rivals possessing more art or more boldness; but now at least there was no danger of that nature on the horizon.

Not for six months after the departure of young Farnley—an event, by the way, the effect of which upon Mary Dalton not even her mother had been able to gauge—did anything occur to vary the agreeable monotony of affairs. Then the vicar heard something which startled and disturbed him; but he kept the matter in his own breast. A good part of his money was invested in the shares of a leading London bank, with the manager of which he was on terms of friendship. One day they were lunching together in town, when the banker suddenly observed:

'By the way, have you any interest in the Popular Bank? I ask, because a good many clergymen are depositors as well as shareholders.'

'No,' said the vicar; 'I avoid such concerns on principle.'

He avoided the Popular Bank for a stronger reason which he did not mention. Seth Farnley was its solicitor.

'I am glad of that; these things are risky, and I know you want to keep your capital intact for your niece and her mother.'

'That is so,' was the reply. After a minute's hesitation, perceiving the banker disposed to say no more on the subject, he added:

'I know the discretion that is incumbent on men like you in such matters. But if you could tell me in confidence, I have a personal reason for desiring to know whether anything is wrong with the institution you have mentioned. What you may say, of course, will not pass from me in any way.'

'Well, without saying in words that anything is actually wrong, matters begin to look suspicious. Experts note signs that are unintelligible to the uninitiated. There is too much personal influence in the concern, for one thing.'

'I understand,' said the vicar, smiling, 'there is a parishioner of mine, for example.'

'Just so. You have heard of that affair of his son's?'

'No?' His interest was genuine now.

Mr Frederick Farnley had been a cashier in the bank, and had been detected in a serious irregularity. It was necessary he should disappear, and the matter was hushed up, his father arranging the deficit. This was what Mr Dalton now learned.

'An incident like that is a bad symptom,' said the banker, with emphasis.

The vicar was very thoughtful for a time. The danger had, then, been worse than he had imagined it. The discovery made him serious.

'At all events,' he remarked, 'his country can spare the young man. He is not likely to come back.'

'Birds of that feather always come back. Depend upon it,' said the banker gravely, 'he will be back before long.'

That was all; but it was enough to decide the vicar's resolution that Mary should be placed in safety as soon as possible. If necessary, he would take some way of hastening matters himself. He did so as soon as he returned home, by speaking to Mary's mother, asking her to try, by some indirect womanly means, to sound Mary's feelings in regard to Dr Maitland. Intruding upon the sanctuary of a maiden's heart was a business that awed the bachelor-vicar so profoundly that the thought of it almost took his breath away. But he had faith that the mother would know the right way to accomplish the task, and he awaited the result with anxiety.

A few gentle words from the mother that evening awoke the girl's consciousness with a visible flutter. It was plain enough she had not, until this moment, thought of Maitland as a lover, and, from what has been already said, it will be evident that for this he was himself mainly responsible. But, on the other hand, the nature of the maiden's own sentiments towards the man was not so easy to read.

'Of course, Mary,' her mother softly said, 'we have observed it before now—your uncle and I—though he may have tried to conceal it from you. He has been full of delicacy and—tenderness for your youth.'

But the girl said not a word, hanging her blushing face in silence. Under the eyes of the considerate mother, she was too excited to think or speak, and she would know better to-morrow. So Mrs Dalton kissed her daughter and sent her to bed.

THE STORY OF THE SALMON.

By Dr ANDREW WILSON.

THERE can be very little doubt, I think, that if a general consensus of opinion were ascertained regarding the title of any one member of the finny tribe to be regarded as 'King of the Fishes,' that designation would fall to the lot of the salmon. Whether we regard the fish from a naturalist's or from a sportsman's point of view, or even from an artistic standpoint, it is seen to be a model of its kind. Its outlines are full of grace, and that the 'line of beauty's curved,' is a saying which may find fit and apt illustration in the salmon's shapely form. Its

beautiful steel blue tint above, and its silvery sheen below, render its colouration attractive enough even to the casual observer; while I presume, regarded after a gastronomic fashion, *Salmo salar* will hold its own with any of the denizens of the deep. I have heard enthusiasts praise the Loch Fyne herring as a titbit not to be excelled in the way of fish, flesh, or fowl; but out of the range of very common things, the salmon will always hold its own as a fish 'fit for a king, either for sport or eating.'

It was Sir John Lubbock, if I mistake not, who once upon a time remarked upon the ignorance which prevailed amongst us concerning the history of most of the common living things by which we are surrounded. I take it that this remark is very true, when applied to the case of animals and plants at large. Hence when a big salmon attracts our attention on the fishmonger's slab, few of us concern ourselves with the history of the beautiful fish, or care to inquire into the story of the days of its youth. Yet the salmon has a history of its own, and that by no means a common one. Time was, when that very biography formed the subject of hotly contested questions in courts of law. 'Are Parr the young of Salmon?' was an inquiry, for example, which for long remained a *questio vexata* both with naturalists and with gentlemen of the long robe. Even now, certain phases of salmon-life are by no means so clearly determined as we might wish or expect, but on the whole we have materials at hand for completing a very fair account of the fish from its birth till it ends its days on the marble slab.

The salmon's kith and kin form a tolerably numerous assemblage. As a family, we find included in the salmon group, not only the various 'trouts,' but also the char, the smelt, the graylings, and other related fishes. The special group or branch of the family—naturalists call it a *genus*—which recognises the salmon as its head, includes in itself a goodly number of species ranging from the salmon to the river trout, the sea trout, the Irish Gillaroo, the Lochleven trout, and the Great Lake trout of North America. Nor are naturalists at all agreed regarding the distinct nature of some of the members of the salmon group. For they display an awkward habit of differing in size and colour and markings at odd times and seasons, and under the influence of varying surroundings, while certain distinct species may breed together, and produce in turn offspring which are fertile, this last being naturally a point that almost settles the sameness and identity of the species concerned.

The story of the salmon begins in the river, and this is true whether we have regard to the parent's duty in laying her eggs, or to the first appearance of the young on the stage of existence. I may here note that a very large amount of light has been thrown on the

salmon's history by the practice of 'salmon culture,' that is, the artificial breeding of the fish for the purpose of stocking rivers. The imitation of nature's ways and processes—in other words, experimentation—here, as in so many other aspects of scientific work, brings to light many new facts and resolves many difficulties of the investigator. Let us see, then, what observation and experiment together teach us about the fish.

In the autumn time, and onwards to the beginning of the next year, the mother-salmon ascends the rivers to deposit her eggs, and thus to secure the continuance of her race. In connection with this periodical visit or visits to the river must be mentioned a very curious fact. The idea is entertained very strongly by some authorities that a salmon invariably returns to its native river or that in which it was bred. It has even been asserted by fishermen that, when several rivers enter the sea in one stream (as at Bonar Bridge, for example), the salmon bred in each river will pass back into their own water and will avoid the strange streams. The late Frank Buckland, a strong believer in this instinct of the fish, regarded the sense of smell as that which led it to its native river. Perhaps the truth is that for the most part salmon do return to their own rivers, but that the practice and habit are not necessarily invariable. We know the fishes certainly swim great distances along coast-lines where they are captured in stake and bag nets, and it may well be the case that now and then a fish will turn into a river that is near, in preference to seeking its own and distant water.

Arrived in her river, the mother-salmon begins to scoop out a kind of trench in the gravel of the stream. This she effects by ploughing into the gravel with her body. This trench is to be the nursery of her young. The eggs are laid in the furrow and are duly fertilised by the male salmon. Then the trench is filled in by the efforts of both parents, the eggs are covered with gravel, and the mound thus formed is called, in fisher's language, a 'redd.' How many eggs a mother-salmon will deposit is, of course, a difficult question to determine, but a stock calculation maintains that she produces about 900 eggs for every pound she weighs. Each egg in its diameter measures about a quarter of an inch, and it is estimated that 25,000 eggs go to a gallon.

Left thus in its gravel nursery, the egg undergoes the mysterious process of development. Into this process it is impossible for me to enter in this paper; suffice it to say that in Dame Nature's own ordered way, the living matter of the egg is in due season formed and fashioned into the likeness of a little fish. The hatching, like other incidents of salmon-life, varies in duration. A little over ninety days is assumed to be a fair period when the temperature is even—say about 40 or 41 degrees Fahrenheit. In the spring the baby-salmon appears. It is not like a salmon in the least, and is called an 'alevin.' We see a big sac or bag attached to the infant fish. This is the yolk-sac, which is destined to nourish it in its early days, and to provide babe's meat for it,

until it is able to forage for itself. In about six weeks' time a crisis occurs in its history. It is then in length little over an inch, but it grows rapidly enough, and when it has passed beyond its babyhood, it assumes a banded appearance, through the development of dark bars on its sides. It has now become the 'parr,' and it was this stage of salmon biography which, as I have remarked, formed the subject of strong controversy in bygone days.

It is no uncommon thing for the young of animals to exhibit marked differences in colour from their parents. We see this fact exemplified even among the quadrupeds. In many cases the young are striped, while the adults exhibit no such markings. Many of the salmon family illustrate the same peculiarity. Growth is very rapid in the young salmon after it has assumed the dress of the 'parr.' In about sixteen weeks, it will have increased to double its original bulk, a length of eight inches being given as the usual limit of parr size. The parr stays in the river. It has no affection for the sea. Indeed, kept in sea-water it will die. But at the end of the second year, a more gorgeous costume is developed. Attaining to the days of its full-fledged youth, the parr is fitted out for fresh pastures by the growth of scales of bright appearance. It loses its parr-markings when it is two years old. Clad in its bright armour it becomes the 'smolt,' and passes for the first time to the sea.

While the changes I have described take place at the end of the second year of the parr's life, it must be borne in mind that certain parrs may exhibit a precocity in that they go to the sea at the end of their first year. Others delay till the third year; but here we see the impossibility of attaining mathematical certainty when we are dealing with the affairs of the children of life. Variation is not only a characteristic of life everywhere, but is also a powerful factor in inducing that wondrous variety of form which marks the living world.

Down to the sea then, in the early part of the year, not sooner than March and not later than June, go the smolts. Change of abode works wonders in their history. They pass to the ocean as miniature salmon, a few inches long. In a few months they return to the river as 'Grilse,' each of which may weigh from 3 to 5 lb., or may even attain a weight of 8 or 9 lb., according to the length of the sojourn in the sea. The grilse is practically a salmon. It can produce eggs, and is therefore to be regarded as a perfect fish; although one must keep in view the fact that even the male parr itself may exhibit a forwardness in development, and be capable of fertilising salmon eggs in this admittedly immature stage.

All that is now required for the grilse to become a salmon, is a return to the sea in the autumn or spring, when, after further growth, it appears in its rivers in all the glory of its adult life. The grilse, of course, breeds in the rivers as does the salmon, and it may be well to note that after the spawning is over, the fish is called a 'kelt.'

Estimates are given by various writers of the remarkable changes which occur in the fishes after their visits to the sea. Thus in 1859, it

is recorded that the Duke of Athol marked three salmon captured on their way to the ocean. They weighed respectively 10 lb., 11½ lb., and 12½ lb. Each fish was marked by having a copper wire placed round its tail. Six months afterwards, they were caught on their return to the river. They then weighed 17 lb., 18 lb., and 19 lb. respectively. 'A change to the sea' evidently benefits many living beings in addition to the human subject. Another observation records that a grilse, after spawning, was found to weigh 2 lb. This fish was marked on March 31. On August 2d of the same year it was recaptured, when it was found to weigh 8 lb., as a salmon.

The sizes to which salmon may attain are often almost beyond belief. Mr Young, quoting from Buckland, gives a list of big fish, which he tells us are usually found in the large rivers. A Tay salmon weighed 70 lb., and measured in length 4 feet 3 inches. A Rhine salmon ran its Scottish neighbour very close with a weight of 69 lb., and a length of 4 feet 8 inches. These were, no doubt, exceptionally large fish, but a forty-pound salmon is by no means a rarity.

Those who are fortunate enough to be able to indulge in salmon-fishing as a sport, cannot complain of unexciting times when the fish are taking, and when the mastery of rod and reel comes into play to secure the active and lithe prey. But in a milder fashion, salmon-catching in the sea has its own charms, and to accompany the fishers while they clear their nets of the spoil is as interesting an excursion as can be imagined. In my mind's eye, I have before me a scene on the shores of the Firth of Forth, not very far from the famous Bridge itself. A background of firs places the silvery beach in striking contrast, and the salmon-fishers' cottages stand close by the water's edge. The long line of stakes runs out to sea over the sandy flat. Here and there the wall of stakes and net is interrupted by the huge pockets into which the salmon pass easily enough, but from which escape is almost impossible. The tide recedes, and in their flat-bottomed coble, the fishermen paddle out to their labours. Coming to a pocket, the fisherman, clad in big sea-boots, enters the enclosure. He is armed with a catch-net on a pole. He travels cautiously around the pocket, sweeping to and fro in the water with his net. Now there is a splash in the water, and we see the back of a big fish disappear after it has risen for a moment to the surface, disturbed by the inquisitive human.

Another trial, and success crowns the quiet, practical intent of the fisher. The salmon is landed in the net and is duly captured. Transferred to the coble without, the fish, full of life, leaping and struggling, is thrown into the boat. A smart, sharp blow with a wooden staff mercifully kills the salmon, leaving only reflex heavings and convulsions, meaning nothing more than the fag-ends of vitality, to indicate that life still lingers without consciousness and without pain.

More captures, and then the coble, laden with its valuable cargo, heads in for the shore. The baskets are waiting for the spoil, and packed amid the fronds of the bracken,

the silvery fishes in a few hours will arrive in the busy haunts of men. No fairer gleanings, surely, can ever come to us from the great harvest of the sea.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

By SIR WALTER BESANT.

CHAPTER XXI.—LADY FRANCES.

It was about the middle of October that Frances came up from the country. Considering that her uniform practice was to remain there until the middle of January every year, it was reasonable to suppose that there was some urgent cause why she returned so soon.

Perhaps she would tell me. It was her general custom to tell me everything. For instance, when her marriage, at the age of eighteen, with an elderly Secretary of State, was under consideration, we talked it over together, weighing the arguments for and against it, dispassionately, which we could very well do, because Frances was not in love with the elderly statesman, though she greatly admired him, and we were not in love with each other.

I called upon her on Sunday morning, a time when I should be certain to find her quite alone. She received me in her breakfast-room. I observed that her face showed certain signs of trouble, or, at least, uneasiness of some kind. It was in her eyes, chiefly, eyes remarkable for their serenity, that the trouble was shown. There was a dark line under them, and her forehead, the forehead remarkable for its sunshine, looked clouded.

'You are not well, Frances?'

'I am always well, George. Sit down and tell me all about yourself.'

'I have got nothing to tell you about myself. But I will tell you, if you please, about Isabel.'

I proceeded to tell her, at length, a great deal about Isabel. Of course, Frances would not believe that a girl could be refined and graceful and well-mannered, who was living at Wapping, the daughter of a skipper.

'You tell me to believe all this of such a girl, George. It is absurd. Where would the girl find these graces? Believe me, a refined and well-bred girl is a most artificial product. It takes the greatest watchfulness and the most careful companionship to create refinement in a girl—a refined and well-bred girl is not in the least a creature of nature, nor, I should suppose, of Wapping.'

'I cannot tell you where she found her refinement, Frances. I suppose, where she found her sweet face, and her soft voice, and her tender eyes.'

'George, you are a lover. Oh! It must be beautiful to be a man if only for the man's power of imagination. I fear your angel would be to me a Common Object.'

'No, Frances. Have I not known you all my life? This privilege is an education. Do you think that after going through such a school

of manners I could be capable of falling in love with a Common Object?'

'It is prettily said, George. I half believe you on the strength of that pretty little speech. Since she appears to you all these things, I can only hope she is really all these things. You must take me to see her. Only, you know, men who fall in love do sometimes permit themselves the most crazy fancies. It makes them happy, poor dears; and I suppose it does no harm to the woman. I daresay she doesn't even understand what the man thinks about her. Well, and you are engaged; and you are going to be married; when?'

'Here comes the trouble. We are not engaged, and we cannot become engaged.'

'Why not?'

'On account of Robert.'

'Oh!' She blushed quickly. 'Then there is a woman, after all. What about Robert?'

'Four or five years ago, when she came with her father to live with him, and to keep his accounts, he told her that some time or other he should want a wife, and that he should marry her. There was to be no wooing, he said; and there has been no love-making ever since. He has never addressed a word of love-making to her.'

'Well? And why can't the girl let him go? She must feel that she is a clog upon him.' Frances spoke more harshly than was customary with her.

'Robert says that he has passed his word. Isabel says that she owes everything to Robert, and that she is bound by common gratitude to wait for him until he releases her. She will obey him in all things. If he says "marry me," she will marry him. If he says "wait," she will wait. If he says "go," she will go.'

'Gratitude of this kind, George, is touching, but it may be embarrassing. What does Robert say?'

'Robert says that he has passed his word. But he also says that it will be long years before he can think of marrying her. I have tried to make him understand that it is cruel to keep a girl on like this.'

'Does he love her? Oh! I cannot think he does. I have watched him while he was thinking of her; I knew it was a woman; and I knew he had got into some kind of scrape with a woman. Men who are in love do not glare and glower when they think of the object of their affections.'

'Does he love her?' I repeated, rising and looking out of the window. 'Nobody can answer that question, Frances, better than you.'

It was a bold thing to say. But one must sometimes say bold things. I remained at the window, looking out upon the Park, but I saw nothing.

Frances made no reply.

I came back and resumed my seat.

'What do you want to do, George?'

'I want Robert to release her.'

'Tell him so, then.'

'I know what he would say. I have told him already. He says that his word is given. Isabel has assured him that she will wait for him. Isabel has always been so gentle, even meek with him, that he would understand

with difficulty that she would, in fact, rather not.'

'Well, what do you propose then?'

'I would try to work upon his ambitions. There is no doubt that poor Isabel, who has no social ambitions, would be a clog upon him. Seeing what kind of man he is, and the future that lies before him, would it be provident for him to hamper himself with a wife who can never belong to your world?'

'It would be madness.'

'Well, Frances, you have taken a very kind interest in him from the first.'

'For your sake, George, you know that.'

'It was for my sake at the outset; now, I hope and believe, you continue your interest in him for his own sake.'

She coloured. Thus doth guilt betray itself. Had she taken no such personal interest in the man, there would have been no cause for the mantling soft suffusion. It really was very pretty. Whatever softened Frances's regal beauty improved the attraction of it.'

'After all,' she said, 'the girl must be an incomparable nymph to have conquered two such men. However, Robert cannot afford to marry a girl of humble rank for a very long time to come. When he stands quite firmly, and has secured his position—but even then it would be madness.'

'If he were to marry the right kind of woman it would be different. He should have in a wife, first, good connections, then, social position, then, some measure of wealth.'

Frances inclined her head. 'Those are all things that would help a rising man.'

'Since he is a young man, and has eyes in his head, beauty would be a great additional advantage.'

'I suppose it would.'

'Well, Frances, do you know that woman?'

She answered one question with another. 'Where should one look to find such a woman?'

'To be sure, Robert is a man without family. He can't get over that. One may give him the manners of a gentleman, but nothing can make him a gentleman by birth.'

'If,' said Lady Frances, 'your cousin is a gentleman by manners and by instinct, what matters his birth? People may say, behind his back, that he has been in some kind of trade. That won't hurt him a bit. The fact that he has been a boat-builder of Wapping will never prevent his rising in the House. He is bound to rise. He will probably become in a very few years a Cabinet Minister. I suppose there is hardly any woman in the country who would not think herself fortunate in marrying a man sure to become in a few years a Cabinet Minister.'

'Meantime, he is only a candidate for this distinction; and nobody, except yourself, Frances, and one or two others, knows that he is likely to get what he wants. Therefore, again I ask, do you know of any woman—such as we desire for him—who would take him?'

'How am I to know?' she replied sharply. 'I do not look about the town in search of wives for my friends.'

'But you know everybody. Do you know

of any woman who possesses all these requirements?'

'You are very strange to-day, George. Your love affairs make you importunate.'

'You shall be as haughty as you please in five minutes, Frances.' I took her hand. 'My dear Frances, you have always been so sisterly with me; and now I am in this terrible trouble, and in order to get out of it, I must speak plainly—very plainly.'

'Well, George,' she threw herself back in her chair, and folded her hands. 'You may speak as plainly, yes, as plainly as you desire.'

'Thank you. Well, then, do you remember a certain memorable day—a most disastrous day—when I came to tell you that my misguided parent had played ducks and drakes with the whole of my respectable fortune? I was very low in spirits that day.'

'Yes, I remember it well.'

'We had a good deal of talk about ways and means. I disgusted you by the absence of any healthy ambition.'

'You always have disgusted me that way,' she said. 'What has all this to do with your cousin?'

'I am working round to him. You will see the connection in a moment. Well, then you fired up and became indignant, and looked splendid. I like to see you when you are indignant. You then uttered words—burning words. You said that all the time you had been watching another George Burnikel growing up besides me. You said that he was ever so much taller, handsomer, more ambitious, more industrious, more resolute, more everything. You said, also, that you had always hoped that in the fullness of time the smaller figure would be absorbed in the greater figure, and there would then be a George Burnikel worth looking at. Do you remember saying this?'

'Yes, I remember; at least, I remember thinking in that way.'

'And I have often thought, Frances, that if I could have become that bigger animal—the ambitious and the resolute—perhaps—I don't know—but perhaps you might have consented. Well, I could not ask, because I quite understand that the thing was impossible. You have always been too great for me, Frances. I must be contented with Isabel, who has no ambition, poor child, and asks for nothing but love, which is pretty well all I have to give her.'

'I do not know what might have happened if things had been different.'

'I was even tempted, being so very small a creature, to assume that ambition, and to go about tricked with the feathers that please you. Being a humble, barn-door fowl, I thought of pretending to be an eagle.'

'I am very glad you did not, George, because I might have believed you.'

'Oh! You would have found me out very soon. However, that nobler creature, that superior George, that imaginary person whom you figured—he does exist; he is, in fact, my cousin. Look at him, Frances, he is exactly like me, only bigger all over, body and brain. He is as ambitious as Lucifer—which is exactly what you want; also, he is nearly as proud as my Lord Lucifer—which ought to please you;

he is masterful through and through—which pleases you; he makes everything and everybody subservient to his ambition; he has learned an immense quantity of things, to serve his own ambition; he is eloquent; he is handsome; he has manners, though he will never acquire the conventional manner—why, that is in itself a distinction.'

'George, you were never so eloquent about yourself.'

'One cannot be. And then, which is something, he is a true man; when he says a thing he means it; he has no past to cover up, like so many men. He will never have anything to conceal in the future. And he will command the whole world, except one person—that person, Frances, is yourself. You are the only person who can rule him. For he worships you, as yet afar off, with no thought of worshipping nearer.'

'What do you mean, George? What authority or grounds have you for saying this? What has Rob—your cousin—said to you?'

'I mean exactly what I say. He has said nothing. But I have eyes in my head.'

'The man has never spoken one word that I could interpret—in such a sense.'

'He never will, unless you bid him speak, and until he is released from his word. Then you will find him eloquent enough.'

'Well, but even supposing that you were right, it would not be in my power to release him. Why cannot he release himself?'

'No; but if a word of hope is authorised—in case.'

She bent her head. Then she looked up, and laughed.

'George,' she said, 'you must indeed be desperately in love to undertake the rôle of matchmaker.'

'That word of hope?' I took her hand, as if I had been her lover indeed, instead of only a go-between. 'What will you say that I may repeat to him? How shall I let him understand that your interest in him is personal?'

'George, you shame me. How can I send a message of hope to a man who is engaged to another woman? The thing is ridiculous. Go away, and make him release that girl.'

'Yet I may say—what may I say?' I insisted.

'Say whatever you please, George. Go. You are a meddlesome creature. I hope your Isabel will prove inconstant. There are Stairs at Wapping—Old Stairs—I believe—and sailors convenient for inconstant maids.'

'You are interested in him. Confess, Frances,' I persisted.

She covered her face with her hands. 'Oh, George,' she murmured, 'I have always been interested in him from the very first.' She sprang to her feet. 'Tell him, George, if you wish, that I like a man to be strong and brave. Yes, I like a man to be capable of sweeping the curs out of his way, as that cousin of yours cleared the stage of those curs at Shadwell.'

'And this great gulf of family. How can it be bridged over?'

'He must build the bridge if he wishes to cross over.'

'My Lady Greatheart,' I said, and kissed her

fingers. 'There is the poem, you know—the lines run like this—

In robe and crown, the Queen stepped down
To meet and greet him on his way.

The metre is a little dickey in the next lines, but the sense makes up that defect. The sense is quite beautiful.

'It is no wonder,' said the House of Commons, 'he is so very much stronger than the whole of the Rest of the House of Commons put together.'

OUR HEDGES.

By S. BARING-GOULD.

IN certain parts of the Alpine chains, there are portions delivered over to the chamois as their own, in which no gun may be fired, where the beautiful creatures may be sure of rest and security, in which they may nurture their young, and to which, when hard pressed, they may flee, as to Cities of Refuge. In Tyrol such an asylum is called a Gämnsenfreiheit.

Of late years it has become necessary for law in Switzerland to extend its protection to the Edelweiss. This peculiar and beautiful flower is much in request, both by lovers who present it to their sweethearts, and also for the formation of little mementoes for travellers.

The Edelweiss does not require an altitude so great that it is near the snow, nor a precipitous rock to crown; the poor plant has been driven higher and ever higher, and to inaccessible points as the only places where it can live unmolested. At Rosenheim, on the Bavarian plateau, at the roots of the mountains are fields of Edelweiss, where the plant is cultivated to satisfy the insatiable visitor who insists on going home from his holiday with a tuft in his hat, and on sending dried specimens to all his friends.

Well! what must England have been before it was cultivated in nearly every part? Verily, it must have been a land of flowers. Now the flowers are banished—that is to say, the vast majority of kinds, by the plough and harrow. Only those are left which can withstand both, and such as take refuge in our hedges. The hedgerow is, in fact, to our English flowers, what the Gämnsenfreiheit is to the Tyrolian chamois, its city of refuge, its asylum from utter eradication.

No one who has travelled much in France and in Germany, especially in the former, can have failed to lament the absence of hedges. Properties being divided and divided up to mere strips, hedges are inadmissible, impossible; and a peg in the ground distinguishes one man's estate from that of another. It has been made a law in Germany that no property may be further reduced beyond that breadth in which a plough can be turned.

In plains and rolling lands, the eye looks to the horizon without anything to rest on, over infinite ranges of strips of cabbage and colza, and potatoes, and beetroot, of barley and lentils, of wheat and sainfoin. There is not a hedge

anywhere—no harbour for such plants as have not the stubbornness to live on in spite of plough, and pick, and spade, and hoe. Flowers there are—for flowers are obstinate and persist in coming—grape hyacinths, star of Bethlehem, lungwort, scarlet anemones, tulips, blue-bottles, cornflowers, salvia, and so on—because they dive out of reach of the spade and share, or because they do not object to having their tubers cut up—they rather like it. They multiply from every portion. But this is not the case with all flowers. Some have too refined a nature, are too gentle, modest, reserved, to endure rough treatment. They ask only to be let alone. They will die if incessantly worried—and for such there is no other place of refuge available except the hedgerow.

I was the other day on the battlefield of Poitiers. The chroniclers tell of the banks of hedges and vineyard walls that then stood and afforded shelter for the English archers. Not one remains. Every hedge has been levelled, every mound spread, and with them have gone all those flowers that once made the battlefield like a garden.

Our old English hedges are the Poor Man's conservatory, are the playground of his children. How starred they are in spring with primroses! How they flush with red robin! How they mantle with bluebell! How they wave with foxglove! Talking of the latter, I was driving one day in Cornwall, when my coachman pointed to a range of foxgloves, and said: 'Look there, sir! They are just like girls.'

'What do you mean?' I asked.

'Did you never notice,' said he, 'that the foxglove always turns its flowers towards the road—it never looks into the hedge?'

'Naturally, no flower exists that does not look to the light.'

'Tisn't that,' said the driver. 'Tis they know they've got pretty faces, and wants to show them.'

Then, again, the ferns and the mosses! What a wealth of beauty in them! What a variety! Not to be discovered in the field; only in their own quarter, reserved for them—the hedgerow.

Our hedges are probably as ancient as our civilisation. We know of a few only that have been erected within the memory of man; the majority have existed from the period when our land was first put into cultivation. And it is remarkable that in the north of Germany, in Westphalia, the Saxon region whence came our Teutonic ancestors, there the hedge with which we are familiar in England is to be met with as well, as an institution of the country, or a feature of the landscape.

Look at the size of some hedges—their width at the base, the height to which they rise, the traces they bear of venerable antiquity! This is not perhaps the case in all parts of England, but it is so in the West.

An agent of an Earl, with large estates, told me that when first he took the agency five-and-twenty years ago, he waged war on the hedges, he had them swept away and replaced by low divisions with quickset over which any child might jump. But after long experience he had learned that our ancestors were not such fools as we suppose, in this matter. He learned that

not only were the high hedges a protection to the cattle from wind and rain, but that they furnished a very necessary store of dry food for them at a time when their pastures are sodden. See bullocks in wet weather, how they scramble up the hedges, how they ravenously devour the dry grass in them. That is because the hedges supply them with something that they cannot get elsewhere.

In the West of England a hedge top is usually finished off with slates that project, and this is to prevent rabbits, even sheep from over-leaping them. In Cornwall, on the hedge top is a footpath beside a large deep cleft in the land, that converts itself into a torrent in wet weather. It is a common sight to see women, and children on their way to school, pencilled against the sky walking on the hedge tops. So when certain hedges have thus been converted into footways, then a rail is often put across them to prevent horsemen from using them in like manner.

Anent sheep jumping hedges, I may venture here to tell a tale of a certain old rogue who went by the name of Tup-Harry. This is how he got his nickname. Harry was a small farmer, and he had a neighbour with better means, and a better farm than his own. One very dry season, Harry had come to the end of his grass for a flock of sheep he possessed. His neighbour had, however, got a fine field of mangel-wurzel. Harry looked over the hedge—a hedge furnished with outstanding slates—and greatly longed for these mangels for his sheep; but he did not relish running the risk of being caught taking them. So he went in the evening into his field, that was bare of grass, put his head against the hedge, bent his back and called 'Tup! Tup! Tup!' whereupon up ran his old ram, jumped on his back, went on to the hedge and over into the mangel field, and all the flock in Indian file scampered after him over the back of Harry. Very early in the morning the rogue went into the devastated mangel field, put his head against the hedge, bent his back, called 'Tup! Tup! Tup!' and up came the ram, ran over his back on to the hedge and returned to the barren quarter again, followed in Indian file by all the flock. That was done several times and no signs appeared anywhere of the hedge being broken through, or of a padlocked gate having been opened. At last the farmer, who was robbed, hid himself one night, and saw the whole proceeding. Tup-Harry did not try that trick on again.

I have mentioned the West as the part of England in which the hedge reaches the highest perfection. The lanes there are often sunk between deep hedges—sawn deep in the rock by the traffic of generations through long centuries, and the trees overarch them, forming of these lanes beautiful green tunnels.

Some sixty years ago, charming lines were written by the late Rev. John Marriott, at one time Vicar of Broadclyst, on a Devonshire lane, so graceful and so beautiful that none will begrudge their insertion here.

In a Devonshire lane, as I trotted along
T'other day, much in want of a subject for song,
Thinks I to myself, I have hit on a strain,
Sure Marriage is just like a Devonshire lane.

In the first place, 'tis long, and when once you are in it,
It holds you as fast as a cage does a linnet;
For howe'er rough and dirty the road may be found,
Drive forward you must, there is no turning round.

But though 'tis so long, it is not very wide,
For two are the most that together may ride;
And e'en then 'tis a chance but they get in a pothor,
And jostle and cross, and run foul of each other.

Oft Poverty greets them with mendicant looks,
And Care pushes by them, o'erladen with crooks;
And Strife's grazing wheels try between them to pass,
And Stubbornness blocks up the way on her ass.

Then the banks are so high, to the left hand and right,
That they shut out the beauties around them from sight;
And hence you'll allow 'tis an inference plain,
That marriage is just like a Devonshire lane.

But thinks I, too, these banks, within which we are pent
With bud, blossom, and berry, are richly besprent;
And the conjugal fence, which forbids us to roam,
Looks lovely, when deck'd with the comforts of home.

In the rock's gloomy crevice the bright holly grows,
The ivy waves fresh o'er the withering rose;
And the evergreen love of a virtuous wife,
Soothes the roughness of care—cheers the winter of life.

Then long be the journey, and narrow the way,
I'll rejoice that I've seldom a turnpike to pay;
And whate'er others say, be the last to complain,
Though marriage be just like a Devonshire lane.

A FOOL'S WAGER.

By JOHN MACKIE.

Author of *The Devil's Playground*, &c.

CHAPTER I.

IF the adventure I am about to relate is open to the charge of sensationalism, it has at least the merit of truth, even to a matter of detail. For I confess to the identity of the individual who so nearly fell a victim to his own foolhardiness.

It was a hot summer's day in '85, and my partner and I were saying good-bye to two or three of 'the boys' on the wharf at Norman-ton, Queensland, just before starting out with a cutter, freighted with general stores for the Van Alphen River in the northern territory of South Australia. Our intention was to establish a depot there, where the drovers in charge of the great travelling mobs of cattle could replenish their supplies. There could be little doubt about its being a somewhat adventurous and risky enterprise, for the country we intended settling in was infested by wild, hostile blacks, and no one, so far as was known, had ever ascended the river before.

'I'll bet you a level fiver, the niggers kill you inside six months,' said Tom Cashman to me cheerily, his sporting instincts aroused as he speculated on the contingencies. Being an 'old timer' in the Gulf, these instincts were the only ones he had left.

Now I was no gambler with fortune, but seeing that this was a matter reflecting upon a man's ability to look after himself, my pride overcame scruples and common-sense alike.

'Done with you,' I exclaimed testily, at the same time reminding Tom of the three years I had spent in the Never-Never country, during which the Minghin dialect had been as my mother-tongue.

'That's just it, Jack,' interrupted another Job's comforter at this point—he was an old friend of mine, and considered he had a perfect right to make himself disagreeable. 'You see you'll get mooning about the ranges and the mangrove swamps in order to interview those niggers in the interests of science, or some such stuff as that, and of course, as they're always on the outlook to extend their gastronomical knowledge'—

'I say, about that bet, you know,' broke in the Hard-headed One, 'what about the stakes?—if you get killed, how are you to ante-up? Hadn't you better make some sort of arrangement?'

The Hard-headed One, whose proper name was MacNab, was one of the most painfully practical men imaginable. He was—I regret to state—a Scotsman, like myself, and Tom Cashman's partner, which last-named fact doubtless accounted for his uncalled-for interference in the matter.

However, the affair was satisfactorily arranged, and shortly afterwards we dropped down the tortuous Norman River with the tide.

CHAPTER II.

We reached the mouth of the Van Alphen without mishap, bumped over the bar, and sailed up the river with a favourable breeze in a somewhat reckless fashion; for at certain places where the banks were high, the wild blacks ran alongside, and we were almost within spear-throw. But soon they dropped behind, and at last where the water ceased to be brackish some thirty miles from the mouth, and just below Leichardt's crossing, we anchored and prepared to discharge our cargo.

In a few days my horses had come overland, the cutter left, and I remained behind with two white men, a Cingalese, a Spanish black from the Philippine Islands, and my black boy 'Jerry,' who was reputed one of the most dangerous semi-civilised boys in the Gulf. Two years previously he had belonged to the black police, but having got into some trouble had left them. As no squatter would have anything to do with him—a bad name like bad news travels far and fast—and he dared not join any of the neighbouring tribes for fear of being hunted down, and shot by the police—he was in an awkward position when I dropped across him. Being short of a hand at the time, and having been attracted by a certain air of intelligence and fearlessness in his manner, I took him into my service, and promised faithfully that no one—not even the police—should molest him with impunity so long as he behaved himself. I kept my promise, and how Jerry kept his will be shown later on.

We built a store and dwelling-house just above the crossing on the Port Darwin track,

about a mile from a long range of wooded hills, and then the wild blacks began to trouble us. They killed two swagsmen at a place called Scrubby Creek; then, in broad daylight, they speared four of my best horses, cut them up, and carried off the flesh before the other horses stampeding into the camp warned us that something was wrong.

There were no police within hundreds of miles; it was necessary that we should act for ourselves. Some travellers coming along just then, I left a couple of them, whom I had known before, in charge of the buildings, and started out with a party of six men, all told, to come to an understanding with the savages. We knew that the black man's citadel lay somewhere between the salt-pans and the sea, protected by a labyrinthine network of salt-water creeks and strips of mangroves. There were some strange stories told regarding it, for some wild-horse hunters and fugitives from the law who had tried to force their way in, had never come back again.

We crossed the river and struck north-east, passing through some pine scrubs, and when we camped at night had made some thirty miles. Early next day we left the forest country and came to the salt-pans. These were simply long, treeless, grassy plains with great clay-pans here and there, which were covered occasionally at high-water by the overflow of the salt-water creeks. These pans were now dry, and thickly crusted with snow-white salt. Beyond them again rose the great sea-bank, which resembled a series of wooded sand-dunes. As we crossed the breezy open, we saw two large mobs of wild horses feeding, and numerous tracks of wild blacks in the softer clay-pans. About a mile from the high sea-bank we were stopped by a salt-water creek, the banks of which were thickly fringed with mangroves. We followed it for several miles in a westerly direction, but it presented an uncompromising, impenetrable barrier to our further progress.

About mid-day, however, we came to a hardly noticeable passage cut through the mangroves; it was so narrow and tortuous that only one person could enter it at a time. We left our horses in a secluded spot in charge of the Spanish black, and resolved to explore it. There could be little doubt but that it was one of the entrances into the black man's citadel.

For nearly a hundred yards we followed one another between those dense walls of rank vegetation; then we came to the salt-water creek. Here we found a blackfellow's fishery which resembled a maze; it had been constructed by driving large stakes into the ground, and binding them together by supple boughs. Luckily the tide was running out, and we got safely across. Another struggle through a narrow passage cut in the mangroves, then, all at once, somewhat to our surprise, we stepped out into what resembled a magnificent walled-in garden. The soil was a dry sandy loam, on which grew shapely wide-spreading shade trees, from the larger species of Eucalypti and Moreton-bay ash to dusky giant fig-trees, and stately feathery palms. There were

purple, white, and blood-red creepers festooning the trees everywhere. There were delicate wild grape-vines wreathing column-like stems, and beautiful green bushes loaded with luscious purple currants, the like of which I have never seen save in that black man's paradise, the signs of whose occupancy were all around.

Wonderingly we passed through it, and on to the great sea-dyke, which must have been at least a hundred feet high. To our astonishment we found that running along the top of it was a hollow, which must have been about four hundred feet in breadth, with a long pool of fresh water at the bottom. And along its shady, sandy banks were innumerable little fires, blackfellow's ovens with steam issuing from the cracks in the sand with which they were covered, piles of nets, stacks of spears, and dozens of dilly-bags and calabashes; in short, all the paraphernalia of a savage's camp, but on such a scale as I had not dreamt existed in Australia. *Splash!* went some dusky figures into the water at our approach; and the women and children who had been left in the camp, while doubtless the men were away on a foraging expedition, were allowed to make off through the reeds and bushes again. Examining the belongings of that camp, and inspecting the contents of the ovens, was one of the most interesting occupations in which I ever engaged.

And what a view was ours from the top of that seemingly interminable sea-wall! On one side lay the illimitable expanse of shimmering blue sea, with its regal stretch of yellow sand, while on the other side was the unbroken sweep of the salt-pans showing gray, green, and dazzling-white as the intense sunlight shone upon it. Beyond them again was the low line of the everlasting bush; it was of a sad-toned glaucous green, and in the misty distance looked for all the world like another but a darker sea; the low, wooded range of hills in the purpling distance resembled a dark, ragged-edged wave creeping up on the far horizon line.

As it was now nearly two in the afternoon, we sat down in an open space to discuss the situation and some dinner we had brought with us to save time—which was so very nearly being the last dinner I had on earth.

CHAPTER III.

Quickly disposing of my beef and damper, and leaving my companions to enjoy their smoke, I shouldered my rifle and strolled down to that glorious beach where the long waves came curling in and broke with a thunderous roar, leaving behind them a fringe of seething snow-white foam. What a salt-sea smack there was in that invigorating breeze which cooled my cheek—what an atmosphere of vitality after the languorous surroundings of the sad-voiced bush! I felt as if possessed of a new and fresher lease of life, and started to walk in a westerly direction.

I must have been indulging in day-dreams, forgetting all about the dangerous nature of the locality to have wandered so far from my comrades, for my usual culpable foolhardiness could hardly have been answerable for such an insane action. As it was, I continued walking,

looking dreamily out to sea, when suddenly I was brought to an unexpected halt and to my senses in a decidedly unpleasant fashion.

I found myself on a spit of sand between the sea and a salt-water arm, which latter, though probably not more than a hundred yards in width, seemed of considerable depth. But the opposite shore, and the high steep bank behind it, were literally black with naked savages. What struck me as strange was that not one of them had a weapon of any kind in his hand; but as I stared at them, first with bewilderment and then with dismay, they began jabbering together excitedly in a way that put me in mind of a pack of hounds in full cry. As the salt-water arm took a sudden turn to the left, some of them were therefore abreast of me.

There was little wonder that I was taken aback, seeing how I had walked right into the lion's mouth. There being a number of bark canoes moored close to the opposite shore, it would have been easy for the savages to have got into them, spread out, and surrounded me. What chance had one man against at least two hundred of them? I stole a hurried glance in the direction of my camp, but there was nobody in sight. My first rational thought was whether or not it would be possible for me to 'stand off' these blacks until my comrades, wondering why I had stayed away so long, followed up my tracks, and came to the rescue. Oh, how I blamed myself on realising the danger I had blundered into! For these savages were not only cannibals of the worst description, but I was the man who in particular had trespassed upon these hunting-grounds that had been theirs for ages, and of whom, therefore, they would naturally be anxious to rid themselves. They probably recognised me, having seen me before on the deck of the cutter when ascending the river; as also doubtless many times since then, when I was riding about in the neighbourhood of the ranges, and they themselves were unseen.

As I stood staring stupidly at them, they suddenly ceased talking—not one as yet had made a move—and I could plainly see that some one was addressing them. Luckily at that moment I overcame my first impulse, which was to turn and make back as quickly as possible in the direction I had come: such an action would only have precipitated their evil designs, for bad I knew they must be. In another second, true to the often whimsical turn of a man's thoughts in moments of greatest peril, I remembered the foolish bet made with Tom Cashman. The careless smile with which the happy-go-lucky Tom had honoured me at the time, rose up before me, maddening me with a sneering semblance of superior wisdom, and as for the cold-blooded proposal of my countryman, that the stakes should be deposited with some one 'in case of accidents,' it seemed to ring in my ears like some infernal prophecy. What a fool people would say I had been when they heard of the nature of my death! Not that sympathy could do me any good after I was dead, but to think that contempt was to take the place of it was a galling thought. In another second I was possessed with a fit of

genuine anger. The blacks had not killed me yet, and people were not going to call me a fool if I could help it! Then I suppose it was only a natural transition to be scowling at the savages as fearlessly as if there were a couple of Gatling guns supporting me, instead of only being possessed with the silly old spirit of fool-hardiness. But my folly was not to end here.

The tall, gray-headed old savage who had been haranguing the blacks, and who was evidently their king or chief, came down to the water's edge, and putting his hands to his mouth called out to me. I suppose it must have surprised these savages considerably when I answered him in their own language, albeit it was not their dialect, the Yucula, which I used, but the Minghin. Still, it was not a difficult matter for either party to make the other understand. The chief wanted to know what I wanted there, and I answered, in order to gain time, that I wanted to speak to him. Then to my surprise he shouted and signed to the effect that if I placed my rifle on the ground some thirty yards or so in the rear of me, he would come across with his wife and talk.

Despite what I knew of the cunning and treachery of these savages, this was a proposal which had a particular attraction for me; keen student as I was of all things anthropological, the opportunity of interviewing a cannibal potentate was not to be neglected. The apprehension that only a few minutes before had possessed me gave place to a feeling of aroused curiosity and expectancy. I walked back as the king had directed, and placed my rifle on the ground some thirty paces from the spot where he would land. I also intimated that if I detected a weapon of any kind in the canoe when they came over, I would pick up my 'devil-devil' and kill every one of them. The superstition with which they regarded my rifle was doubtless what saved me, for in the scuffle that afterwards took place, they never once put a finger on it.

Over came the canoe—there was a paddler in front and one in rear, while with the gray-headed king or chief was a personage who I suppose must have been made queen on account of her enormous size and ugliness. She was the tallest savage I had ever seen in my life. I vouch for the truth of it; her arms were so long that her hands actually hung down to her knees like an ape. She regarded me with what was doubtless meant to be a friendly smile, but the only effect of which was to make me feel decidedly uncomfortable—the savage has a gift, which to a certain degree the civilised man has lost, and that is to read one's innermost thoughts on the human countenance.

At first I took good care to keep the king and his ape-like spouse a good arm's-length in front of me. I told the former, as well as I could, that if he would not interfere with the whites or their cattle and horses, I should take very good care that the white man should not molest his people, or trespass more than was absolutely necessary upon his hunting-grounds. What a farce that cunning old savage with the inscrutable face must have thought the whole affair! Then I became so engrossed in trying to understand the strange questions of

the old potentate, and in asking others in return, that I hardly noticed the savages who had begun to swim the salt-water arm, and were silently grouping themselves round their chief.

Then suddenly the fresh folly I had been guilty of came home to me, and I realised that I was now more at their mercy than ever. Tom Cashman had understood me better than I had known myself. Where were my comrades? If they could only come in sight it might have some effect upon the blacks. But the time had passed for waiting on chance—it was necessary that I should act, and that right quickly. I took a step backwards towards my rifle, pointing towards the opposite shore as if the interview were at an end, at the same time saying I would rejoin my men who were hard by, and fetch them some presents. How I managed to appear at my ease when I said this is a mystery to me now.

How that human ape, the chief's wife, contrived to steal in upon me is beyond my comprehension. I only know that before I could draw my revolver, a pair of powerful arms had pinioned mine to my sides, I was caught up like a feather-weight, and dashed violently, face downwards, on the ground.

There were a dozen sinewy hands on various parts of my body pressing me down. I struggled in an agony of desperation. In another minute the weight on my head and back would crush the life out of me. How my soul sickened and rebelled against such a fate! The very thought of my ineffable folly and ignoble death during those terrible moments was driving me mad, and I made a wild struggle to free myself. I remember raising myself on to my hands and knees, and failing to reach my revolver pouch. I caught a glimpse of two savages carrying up a couple of large stones out of the canoes, and knew these were to knock me on the head with, seeing they had as yet no other means of killing me. I believe I was lapsing into unconsciousness when I heard something that brought me to myself again. It was the sharp ring of a rifle close at hand. The blacks ceased to press down upon me. I wrenched my arms free, and found that by some unaccountable means, somebody had placed a rifle in my hands. The stock rested on the ground, and the barrel pointed over my right shoulder. I took chances, pressed down the trigger, and then— It was a horrible thing that happened, but it saved me. In another second I was on my feet, and the savages had dived into the salt-water arm like so many cormorants. And there stood my black boy Jerry, with two hideous objects lying prone upon their faces between us.

Jerry, who entertained less faith in my discretion than probably he did in some of my other qualities, had thought fit to follow me up along the top of the bank, and was just in the nick of time to rush down to the beach, like the plucky blackfellow he was, pick up my rifle, fight his way through the blacks, and place it in my hands. No one need tell me that there are no heroes amongst the Australian blacks, for Jerry was an aboriginal and a hero.

It is not unlikely that some squatter may read this article and tell him of it. If so, good luck go with you, Jerry, old boy. There's a very soft spot in at least one white man's heart for you.

As it was, Jerry was the first blackfellow who ever called me a fool, and did not hesitate to rate me soundly for my folly. I knew how richly I deserved it all, and did not contradict him.

Two years afterwards, when on the Croydon gold-fields, I met Tom Cashman's partner, MacNab.

'Mac, old man,' I said, 'I did wrong in betting on such a thing as my life that time at Normanton, you know.'

'You're quite right,' said the pawky Mac, with a face as long as a fiddle; 'money made by betting must carry a curse with it. But, by the way, I've got a fiver to give you back—those stakes, of course.'

'And you'll be good enough to add another fiver to that, and right now—just for fear of accidents, old chap,' I remarked politely.

Jerry had a new saddle and a suit of clothes out of those stakes, but I have never betted since, nor ever shall again.

STEEPLE-JACKS.

IN Lancashire and Yorkshire, and the other great centres of the factory system in the north of England, there is naturally constant work for steeple-jacks, and a number of men ply that hazardous trade on the high chimneys which cover some of those districts like a forest. The smoke-shafts of Lancashire are among the highest in this or in any other country; and as they have to be kept in a state of perfect security, the men who have made a specialty of this sort of contracting must not only be well skilled, but full of judgment and resource. They have, as a rule, a certain force of character which distinguishes them from other workmen; and when they are prudent they do well. One of them who lives at Rochdale combines with his chimney-climbing the business of music-hall proprietor, and conducts a circus of varieties in the town. Until a year or two ago, he used to live in a caravan and move about from one job to another in that way—chiefly because he did not care to sleep in damp beds. Then he built himself another van, like a miniature Pullman car, and for a long time lived in that; but he has now given up the nomad life, and dwells in a conventional stone house. He still jumps into cold water every morning of the year, and spends twenty minutes with the clubs and the punching ball; he never tastes alcohol, and he never smoked in his life. 'The Lancashire Steeple-Jack,' as he calls himself, has his rivals, however, though his smiling face and lithe frame are familiar all over that county, and in others besides. Manchester has several: there are some in

Liverpool, and each of the mill centres has one or two men who can 'ladder' a chimney, and sit astride the vane on a church spire. They often give employment to others, who work for wages varying from one shilling to eighteenpence an hour; and though they all say that the trade is safe enough, not by any means so hazardous as it looks, yet they have many adventures to tell of.

Each man has his own special tricks—his fancies in laddering, his own form of apparatus. He will tell you that his plan is a lot safer than another man's, because of some deviation from accepted form. But to the uninitiated eye all forms look equally dangerous. A man sitting in a cradle, suspended by a rope attached to an iron pin driven between the bricks of a chimney, while he picks out the mortar sixty feet above the earth preparatory to 'pointing,' causes a shudder which is not diminished when he explains that it would not be safe if he had not a special knot of his own to hitch on his ropes with. In methods of laddering, however, the differences are most marked. One takes an iron spike a few inches long, and drives it into the chimney at the foot so that it holds firmly. Then he lashes the end of an eighteen-foot ladder to it with a rope, climbs up the ladder, which wriggles about in a nerve-shaking fashion, and, sitting on the top of it, lashes the upper end to another spike. So he proceeds to the top, alternately driving in spikes, or hold-fasts, lashing the ladder close to the chimney, and climbing to the next stage—always on the outside of the ladder. Another method which the writer has seen practised by a Liverpool climber differs materially from this. The ladders are twelve feet long, and on each one there are four iron joints which project at right angles; iron sockets are driven into the chimney, and when these are firm, the projecting arms of the ladders fit into them, and the section is made secure. The climber mounts to the top of the first ladder, drives in the sockets for the next, and adjusts it; and so in time reaches the top of the chimney. But the arms and sockets are so long that the ladders are always more than two feet away from the brickwork, and the steeple-jack goes up on the inner side of the ladder, between it and the chimney. In this way he has a certain protection, and it is also contended that this form of laddering is the firmest and strongest known. That is a much more important point, for it is a fact that accidents rarely happen to steeple-jacks through failure of nerve or giddiness; the more frequent cause is the intemperate habit of the workman or the failure of the tackle. A fatal accident at Runcorn, for instance, was shown to be entirely due to the weak and improper tackle. It is unfortunate that steeple-jacks are not always a steady class; they earn large sums even as day-workmen, and as contractors generally do well; but they are not always careful to keep their heads so clear as they should be.

The Liverpool climber just mentioned laddered the Vauxhall chimney in that city in six hours by his method, and it is 310 feet high; but a still higher chimney is that of the

Runcorn Alkali Company at Weston on the Mersey, which reaches an elevation of 330 feet. This has been climbed in the same manner, as well as by the other methods; but the old fashion of flying a kite over such a chimney, attaching a line, and hauling the man up in a cradle, has vanished entirely. The highest chimney in England is supposed to be that at Barlow and Dobson's mill at Bolton; it is 368 feet high, and is built of 800,000 bricks, and 122 tons of stone. It is excelled by at least two in Scotland; the St Rollox chimney in Glasgow is 445 feet, and the Townsend chimney in the same city is said to be 468 feet high. But the steeple-jacks make no more of climbing such chimneys than one a third of their height, though the vibration is more serious at times. All chimneys vibrate, especially in a gale—it is a condition of their safety—but the oscillation at the top is a serious matter for any one at work there during a high wind, and in such conditions, the job is postponed to a calmer season. Lancashire also boasts one of the crookedest chimneys in the country—a shaft at Brook Mill, Heywood—which is nearly 200 feet high, but is more than 6 feet out of plumb. It has been belted with iron bands, and is considered secure. There is only one way of saving such a chimney from collapse if the bend increases; that is, to cut a slice out of the masonry on the other side, so that it may sink on that side and bring itself straight. But that method, though efficacious at times, often weakens the structure. The only other alternative is to pull down and build afresh, and there are two ways of doing that. One is to pull the chimney down, stone by stone, beginning at the top; a tedious method, and a terribly risky one, if the structure be tottering to its fall. The other method the writer has often seen practised in Lancashire and Yorkshire. At a mill a few miles outside Manchester, for instance, a dangerous chimney had to be 'felled' not long ago, and the contractor started to cut away the brickwork at the base, on five out of its eight sides. Once, thinking it was about to settle on him, he and his men hurried away, but the fall did not take place, and they returned to work. The gaps were propped up with timber, and the structure supported in this way till the proper time. Then the wood was soaked with paraffin and daubed with resin, and ignited. The flames and smoke poured up the chimney with a great roar, and the daring man lingered at the foot for a quarter of an hour, feeding the flame at one point so that the wood might collapse there first, and the chimney take that direction in its fall. At length the balks gave way, the chimney tottered, then leaned over in a circular fashion, and finally collapsed in the middle, and fell in a heap. The climber told the writer that he distinctly preferred to bring a chimney down in that way; for once while taking down a shaft in a North Lancashire district, he heard it groan and creak, and had only time to slip down the rope and rush away, when it fell.

The biggest chimney ever 'felled' was brought to earth last St Valentine's day in Manchester. It had belonged to a paper-mill which had been disused for four years, and the site was

needed for other purposes. The chimney was 275 feet high, and was extremely thick and substantial, being no less than 92 feet in circumference at the base. One million bricks were used in the chimney itself, besides 100,000 in the foundations; and the weight of the shaft was estimated at 4000 tons. Several rows of houses lay some 60 or 70 yards to the rear of the chimney, and on one side the old mill buildings still stood. But in front there was a wide space of waste-land on which the steeple-jack determined to bring the stack down. He cut away the brickwork at the base on rather more than five of the eight sides, and left a gap nearly 60 feet long and 5 feet high. As the bricks were cut out, pieces of stout timber were put in to take their place, and the shaft which had leaned two feet the other way was brought by these means into a perfectly upright position, and the whole of the weight of 4000 tons came down on 140 pieces of wood. The timber cracked and groaned under the strain, but held firm; and then the interstices were filled with coal and shavings, and creosote and paraffin were poured over everything at the base of the shaft. At three in the afternoon a light was applied to this material, which instantly flared into a blaze, and volumes of smoke began to pour from the top of the chimney and the cracks at the sides. The steeple-jack alone remained near the structure, and frequently threw buckets of oil on those pieces of timber which he wished to burn away first, so that they might collapse before the others, and the chimney might fall in that direction. Eight minutes went by, and then the operator ran up a ladder outside the chimney, some twenty feet, and examined one of the cracks. He instantly descended, quite calmly, however, and walked backward a few feet, watching the tall shaft, which, as he reached the ground, began to lean over to the waste-land. At first it showed no signs of breaking, but suddenly it bent at one of the cracks, the bottom portion fell alone, and the upper part telescoped and dropped with a tremendous crash. The fall of these 4000 tons of masonry was an exciting sight, and was watched by 10,000 people; and all the time the steeple-jack stood less than 20 feet away from the descending mass.

A Sheffield steeple-jack has climbed several spires merely to decorate them with flags for public rejoicings; another climbed to the tower of Rochdale Town-hall by the lightning-conductor, merely to fix a flag. Of narrow escapes they have many. One tells how he was standing on the coping of a chimney which suddenly gave way. He seemed certain to fall to the ground, but the ladder remained firm, and as he slipped he caught it, and hung there while the stone went crashing to earth alone. The Rochdale climber spoken of once fell 70 feet from a mill at Linfitts, owing to an accident while he was laddering. He was terribly hurt, but recovered, and still carries on his trade with unshaken nerve. He once, however, had an adventure which exceeds in thrilling interest all the stories of steeple-jack daring in the north. He had a contract to demolish a chimney near Rochdale Station, and went up one day accompanied by an assistant, who had been

drinking. Suddenly, the man gave a yell and tried to jump off the stage; his employer just managed to grab his ankle as he went over, and there for a moment the man hung, depending for his life on the strength of another man's grasp. Then he succeeded in getting hold of the belt which all climbers wear, and started to haul him up; but the madman bent upwards and dug his teeth into his preserver's thumb, and struggled and fought very viciously. A crowd soon assembled below and watched this extraordinary fight with great excitement, and the combat continued for several minutes. The man on the top could not get the other up, and would not let him down, so in the end he stunned him by hitting him on the head with a jemmy, and let him down by a rope. Then he followed him and discharged him on the spot.

Many less sensational adventures could be described, but they are of a kind common to steeple-jacks. The work of these men is of vast importance to the manufacturers, for big chimneys cost a great deal of money. The stone chimney of the Manningham Mills at Bradford, built in the style of an Italian campanile and 250 feet high, cost £12,000; and hundreds of shafts in Lancashire and Yorkshire represent an expenditure of £5000 or £6000 each. If aught go wrong with such erections, it is essential that the repairs should be entrusted to a capable man; and a chimney contractor who can belt a cracked chimney and make it safe, or restore a crooked shaft to a proper state of uprightness, saves the necessity for its demolition, and for a substantial outlay on a new one. Thus the contracting steeple-jacks of these districts, by their great nerve and judgment, and by their ability to keep the giant shafts in good repair and security, ensure not merely economy to the manufacturers, but the preservation of the public safety.

SOLUBLE SILVER.

TRULY, chemistry, above all the sciences, is the great-granddaughter of the fairy godmother of the folk-tales. She has always some new wonder in store for us, and her wonders are more beautiful and more astonishing even than the tree with the golden apples, the wishing-caps and Fortunatus' purses that we read of in Grimm and Hans Andersen. The magic spy-glass that enables the spectator to tell what is going on in any part of the world is a baby's toy compared to the spectroscopic, which shows us what is happening in the farthest star, and the purse of Fortunatus is quite eclipsed by the cyanide process that enables us to extract gold from rocks so poor in the precious metal that no one but a chemist would suspect its existence. Precious and wonderful are the lesser gifts of our modern fairy godmother, and the curious substance we are about to describe is one of them. Like many other of her gifts, we do not know of any practical use for it at present, but we shall find a use for it some day, as we have done for nearly all her other

gifts. For the present it is sufficient that the gift is beautiful and interesting; so now to tell you all about it.

With one exception, metals, so far as we know, are practically insoluble in water. This is true of all simple substances, as, for instance, sulphur or charcoal. It seems necessary that before a body can become soluble it must unite with some other body of an opposite character to itself. Sometimes union takes place with the water, as in the case of the metals sodium and potassium, which combine with water so violently that flames are produced. Silver seems to be the only exception, and even then it dissolves in a curious gelatinous condition, quite unlike silver as we know it. This soluble silver exists in two or three forms, and is interesting not only as a chemical curiosity, but also on account of the intrinsic lustre and beauty of the different forms.

Soluble silver is not difficult to make. The materials required are: ordinary green sulphate of iron, citrate of soda, and silver nitrate. A thirty per cent. solution of the first should be made, a forty per cent. of the second, and a ten per cent. of the third. We give the proportions in case any of our readers might like to make some of these beautiful varieties of silver for themselves. The liquid becomes black immediately on mixing, and must be shaken vigorously for several minutes. It is then allowed to settle for a quarter of an hour, and the liquid portion is poured off, leaving a lilac-coloured gelatinous material behind. This gelatinous material is soluble silver. It can be dissolved in water to form a blue solution, or spread on paper in a blood-red layer. As it dries, the colour changes to a metallic blue when half dry, and to a dead blue surface when quite dry. If it be dried in lumps, various colours and lustres can be produced.

From the soluble form of silver, another variety is obtained by adding to it a solution of Epsom salts. The remarkable thing about these varieties of silver is the astonishing changes of colour they can assume. The insoluble variety is brown, gradually getting darker and darker, but various chemical solutions will re-dissolve it, changing it back into soluble silver, but of a colour totally different from the original. Solution of borax gives brown; Glauber's salts, yellow-red; sulphate of ammonia, red. Mr Carey Lea, who discovered these interesting substances, found in one case that the insoluble variety became soluble suddenly of its own accord, giving a beautiful rose-red liquid.

The films produced by spreading the insoluble variety on paper give gorgeous effects of colour, varying from yellow to blue through a whole series of brilliant metallic greens. The colours depend to a great extent upon the amount of washing the material has received. If it has not been washed at all, the film has the appearance of bright blue metal, but the blue seems to disappear gradually in washing, until finally almost pure yellow is obtained. When it is spread on glass, very perfect mirrors are produced on drying.

The next form is obtained by a more com-

plicated chemical process. It is red at first, changing to black and then to bronze colour. If dried in lumps or spread on paper, it has the appearance of burnished gold. Like the former variety, it gives a perfect mirror when dried on glass. If the gold-like variety is kept perfectly dry it changes to a more brilliant yellow on exposure to sunlight, but in presence of moisture it is resolved into ordinary silver of great beauty in a few days. The other varieties degenerate rapidly on exposure to light into various shades of brown.

The different modifications that we have mentioned are only the most stable and clearly defined varieties of this curious form of silver. It seems capable of assuming all the colours of the spectrum. Almost every shade of blue, green, red, yellow, and purple has been obtained. On one occasion Mr Carey Lea secured a variety giving an intense yellowish-brown solution, which changed to bright scarlet on addition of phosphate of soda, separating, on standing, in a purple jelly, which afterwards turned bluish-green. No fairy tale that we have ever read has put on record such a wonderful substance as this. Even the *Arabian Nights*, with all the imagery of the East to draw upon, has failed to hint at such a marvel. Many chemical solutions, when brushed across the dry films, produce wonderful hues, and a crystal of iodine placed on the film becomes surrounded with rings of Newton's colours.

The only immediate application that we can think of for these beautiful forms of silver is in coating glass and similar materials with films of silver to form mirrors. We should have mentioned, by the way, that some of these films possess very interesting optical properties. Another possible application is in photography: if we could find a means of rendering them permanent, the films might be of much use, but the matter is too technical for us to deal with here. Nevertheless, even if it is of no practical use, and therefore, in spite of its beauty, uninteresting from an utilitarian point of view, the discovery of this form of silver may lead to the finding of other similar materials which may be of the greatest practical value.

AT TWILIGHT.

CONTENT thee, Love! Stretch forth no thought to seize
Joys that beyond this twilight hour may lie;
The silver silence holds us, by-and-by
To comfort into dark by soft degrees
All cares that man has suffered or foresees;
All doubt, all dread, all striving melt and die
Into forgotten dreams, and we desery
The Shadow and the Promise, only these.

So leave the word unsaid, the song unsung,
Forbear to praise or pray, so there may fall
A moment in the Temple's ritual
When even worship fails to find a tongue.
Keep this one hour, that Love's heart may approve
The sanctities and silences of Love.

E. BLAIR OLIPHANT.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 650.—VOL. XIII.

SATURDAY, JUNE 13, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

THE SMALL COIN OF CONVERSATION.

THE thought of all ages is the atmosphere we breathe; but sententious wisdom is handed down more compactly in maxims, proverbs, and sayings that influence us beyond our knowledge, perhaps beyond our belief; we are unaware of our immense debt to literature, and our equally immense dependence upon it for the conduct of life. For the conduct of life is regulated and guided, even in our most practical of nations, by theories of life, and theories are the outcome of thought, riveted in the memories of lesser men by some happy expression which conveys the idea in a terse sentence or striking phrase. A volume of philosophy may thus be summed up, and brought to the understanding of men who have never read it, simply by the electric flash of a proverb or maxim. When the philosophy ceases to influence the age, the maxims are discredited, but new phrases take their places, drawn from fresh theories, and men continue to live as before, by the wisdom of the wisest, condensed to suit their weaker understandings, and to strike their hearts and imaginations. Thus in the last century, after the revolution against the intensity of Puritan times which produced the licentiousness of the Restoration, men turned to a cold morality as the refuge against extremes, and such maxims as 'Honesty is the best policy' came into common usage, summing up the philosophy of the time in a portable and striking fashion. At the end of the same century, with the new-born dreams of universal progress, Burns's grand couplet:

The rank is but the guinea stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that,

struck the imagination of his hearers and awoke in them a vivid realisation of truths they had not so well perceived in volumes of rhapsodising. And after the tumult and upheaval of the French Revolution had produced its reaction, came the calm of Wordsworth, with 'plain-living and high thinking'

as a note to attract the attention and induce reflection.

All these golden sayings are the valuable coinage of the realm of thought. They have the highest importance. But in our most ordinary moods, our commonest conversation, we are not free from the influence of literature. Even unlettered people take upon their tongues, all unwitting, phrases which bear the image and superscription of great writers, of whom, perhaps, they have scarcely heard; phrases passed from mouth to mouth, generation after generation, because of their universal aptness, their perfection of significance. How many, for instance, speaking of the wife as 'the better half,' know that they are quoting Sir Philip Sidney, or invoking 'Mrs Grundy,' guess that her author was Thomas Morton, a playwright who lived till 1838? Such phrases, or snatches of phrases, are the small coin of conversation, which bear the same imprint as the more important quotation, and we use them freely without a thought of their origin, as we pass the 'nimble sixpence' from hand to hand in our daily traffic, without a glance at its workmanship. The metaphor that struck our ancestors as so admirable strikes us still, and we continue to use the apt adjective which, first given by Shakespeare or Milton, sounds as fresh to-day as when originally applied. The 'bubble reputation,' the 'itching palm,' the 'milk of human kindness,' the 'undiscovered country,' the 'green-eyed monster,' still our favourite synonyms for fame, covetousness, humanity, eternity, and jealousy, are from Shakespeare, who has indeed furnished us with much of our small coin. His adjectives are the most apposite, too, of any in the language. Quoting him, we speak of an 'ancient grudge,' of 'bated breath,' 'this working-day world,' 'good set terms,' 'a foregone conclusion,' 'better days,' 'fell purpose,' 'even-handed justice,' 'golden opinions,' 'a charmed life,' 'a towering passion,' 'a round unvarnished tale,' 'hair-breadth 'scapes,' and many more common expressions whose list it

were but 'damnable iteration' to extend. Verbal phrases of his are also of the most familiar. To 'dance attendance,' to 'scotch the snake, not kill it,' to 'applaud to the echo,' to 'sup with horrors,' to 'die in harness,' 'making night hideous,' 'a tale unfold,' to 'out-Herod Herod,' to 'fool to the top of his bent,' to 'cudgel one's brains,' to 'speak by the card,' are some of the most obvious examples.

Next to Shakespeare, we draw most profusely from King James's version of the Bible for terse expressions, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes furnishing the larger proportion from the Old Testament, and St Paul's epistles from the New. Milton, though far behind these two great sources of English speech, gives us more familiar expressions than any other writer after them. From him we have learned to speak of 'a dim religious light,' of 'grim death,' 'a heaven on earth,' and 'sanctity of reason;' of 'adding fuel to the flame,' of 'tempering justice with mercy,' of the 'busy hum of men,' 'the light fantastic toe' (that boon to provincial reporters!), and the 'neat-handed Phillis.' Chaucer, though rich in material for quotation, has given us no pithy phrases; but from Spenser, who sang of him as the 'well of English undefyled,' we get 'nor rhyme nor reason,' 'by hook or crook,' 'sweet attractive grace,' and 'through thick and thin.'

The wise Bacon has left little 'small coin' with his great and abundant riches of apothegm, but 'home to men's business and bosoms' is a somewhat familiar expression. It is, however, the picturesque, not the sententious writers to whom we are indebted for the briefer quotations which are the subject of our notice. Such great writers as Addison, Johnson, and Young, furnish few 'everyday' phrases; Addison's 'classic ground,' Johnson's 'good hater,' and Young's 'balmy sleep,' are the principal contributions from these three; Pope, however, is more generous. From him we have the 'ruling passion,' 'guide, philosopher, and friend,' 'ears polite,' 'labour'd nothings,' 'a little learning,' 'damn with faint praise,' 'run amuck,' 'every virtue under heaven.' The poet Thomson, less read by the general public, has transmitted several sayings; 'the young idea,' 'unutterable things,' 'beauty unadorned' (a misquotation, but manifestly from Thomson), 'hungry as the grave,' and the 'world's dread laugh' (also misquoted).

Goldsmith is responsible for a grave and sententious saying, 'men not measures,' as is Swift for 'sweetness and light.' Burke's 'wise and salutary neglect' is usually misquoted 'wholesome neglect.' From Burke also we get 'cold neutrality.' Cowper has given us our 'dear five hundred friends,' 'the cups that cheer but not inebriate,' 'gloriously drunk,' 'a frugal mind,' and 'an aching void.' Sheridan, 'the soft impeachment,' and 'a very pretty quarrel.' Coming to the present century, the task of tracing back our common 'parlance' to the originators becomes more difficult. Southey was the inventor of that happy phrase, 'the march of intellect;' Coleridge, of 'a sadder and a wiser man.' Sir Walter Scott has supplied us with a new title for woman in 'ministering angel,' for an audience in 'sea of upturned faces,' and for bravery in 'beard the lion in his den.' Keats's 'thing of beauty' is a household word,

so is Tennyson's 'honest doubt,' and 'grand old gardener' has been parodied repeatedly.

Many of our pet expressions are traceable to obscurer sources. 'Glorious uncertainty' is from a play by Macklin, of the last century, 'pampered menial' from a poem by Moss, called 'The Beggar.' 'Masterful inactivity' was a happy inspiration of Sir James Mackintosh; 'the Almighty dollar,' of Washington Irving. 'The schoolmaster abroad' is from a pertinent observation of Lord Brougham, and 'caught on,' to use a slang expression of later days, because of its immediate appropriateness. It is in this way that the small coin of conversation is generally manufactured. A new phase of activity, a new feature of society appears, and for a time is spoken of and written of in roundabout fashion. But one day some bright wit invents a new phrase which puts the whole movement or tendency into a nutshell, and straightway the public adopt it into their vocabulary. If the movement passes, the tendency diverges, then the phrase dies away too; but if they come to stay, the phrase too is retained, and perhaps crystallises at length into 'cant.' It is impossible, in the imperfect state of men's minds, that phraseology should not come to this. While words stand for ideas, and are the sole medium of their conveyance from one to another, the tendency to 'cant' is irresistible. Carlyle, who wrote so strenuously about the necessity of clearing the mind of cant, insensibly fell into the snare himself, or at least caused others to do so. Phrases of his, such as 'the Gospel of Work,' are the inheritance of his followers, and bear to all who hear them his own image and superscription. Quite recently, too, a thoughtful writer has called attention to the influence (in his eyes for harm) wrought by the common phrases of scientific thought, such as 'survival of the fittest,' which he contends has made society more selfish, and has destroyed compassion. However this may be, we shall always eagerly seize upon a bright and pithy saying to add to the stores we already possess of the small coin of conversation, and the coiner of such phrases is certain of being remembered for a long time to come, as one who has added to the convenience, picturesqueness, and flexibility of language.

A LOCAL VIEW.

CHAPTER II.—THE VICAR MAKES A NEW WILL.

MARY DALTON lay awake for some hours that night, and if we may take a peep at her thoughts, less explanation of what followed will be necessary. Dr Maitland now appeared to her mind in a new and unexpected character. Even when a maiden is wholly indifferent to a man, his appearance as her lover clothes him with a special interest. Mary was not indifferent to the young doctor—far from it; but this change was so sudden and unforeseen that she was not able to adapt herself to it at once. The love that is most worth winning is that which grows slowly, and that which grows slowly lasts longest. She did not know, in fact, as yet, whether she cared for Dr Maitland, or

whether her heart was going to respond to the tender touch of this new knowledge. She did not know anything clearly about herself in the matter—except that she was pleased, almost grateful, that Dr Maitland honoured her so much as to love her. Neither by reading nor experience did she know enough about the tender passion to understand her position and duty. For another thing, she had not the faintest suspicion of her uncle's wish that she should accept this man. Had she known it, the knowledge might have had a decisive influence.

Moreover, there was the memory of Freddie Farmley. That young gentleman had not hesitated, like Dr Maitland, to declare his love for her. The declaration had pleased her, and had given the young man a warm (though perhaps not quite secure) place in her heart. She attempted no comparison between the two lovers, though there was a consciousness of that nature. But when Farmley was going away he had pressed her to plight her troth to him, and, frightened rather than unresponsive, she had refused to do this. She had pleaded delay; and the urgency of his importunity induced her to promise that he should not lose her before she reached the age of twenty-one. Mary Dalton had not committed herself much by a promise in these terms; but in truth, as regards Farmley, as in the case of Maitland, she felt the uncertainty of resolution resulting from not knowing her own feelings very accurately. Had the first lover remained, or were he even now to return, his ardour would too probably have prevailed against his rival. The girl was not conscious of this, or she would not have come to the resolution that she formed before falling asleep. If Dr Maitland declared himself, she would ask him to wait for a few months longer, and she knew he would willingly do so. With any foresight, howsoever dim, of possibilities connected with the coming back of Farmley, the girl's honour would not have permitted her to take such a course with Dr Maitland.

It happened accordingly. The doctor made his declaration, and the way in which Mary received it made him not only willing, but almost eager, to postpone asking for her final answer for a little while longer. There was no *arrêré pensée* in the blushing frankness of the girl's manner—she was incapable of it. The vicar was not so fully satisfied as the doctor, and had his private misgivings; but he accepted the position, and hoped that the altered relation in which his niece now stood towards his friend would tend to shorten the time of waiting.

All was going well, and would have gone well, and Mary Dalton and Dr Maitland were virtually regarded in the parish as engaged, when the sinister influence that troubled the

vicar's life reappeared. Letters came from Frederick Farmley that, after six months of South Africa, he was coming home again. One of these letters was received by the young man's father, and two friends of Freddie Farmley received a similar communication. In each letter he named the steamer by which he was coming to England—the *Ross Castle*, sailing from Cape Town on the 25th of June. Thus the matter was placed beyond doubt. It was only small comfort to Mr Dalton to know that the scamp had not written to Mary; but of course Mary soon knew of his coming.

The Rev. Frank Dalton's fear of the name of Farmley was so violent that he now took a precautionary step which was only justified by the gravest apprehensions. By his will, all he possessed was left in trust for his brother's widow and child, the latter to receive a certain portion on marriage, and the remainder on the death of her mother. Mr Dalton also wrote to his solicitor to draw up a codicil revoking the disposition relating to Mary Dalton in the event of her becoming the wife of Seth Farmley's son. The motive was to protect rather than to punish, because the vicar was sure that, without her expectations, Mary was not desired by the Farmleys. In the event of the vicar's death (and the uncertainty of life was a dominating thought with him), the security of this codicil would be essential.

The confidential clerk of Mr Fairfield, the solicitor of Croham, brought the will and codicil to the vicarage one day when Mary was there with her uncle, and the latter was noting with some uneasiness the interest she showed in the expected return of Frederick Farmley. He had himself introduced the subject, and the steamer was due at Southampton in a fortnight. The clerk was announced as waiting in Mr Dalton's study.

'You know what this envelope contains, Mr Brock?' said the vicar, opening it.

'Yes, Mr Dalton; I copied it myself. Will you execute the codicil now, or defer it to another time?'

'Now,' replied the vicar, ringing the bell.—'If Mr White is in the school,' he said to the servant, 'ask him to step here for a minute.'

The schoolmaster having arrived, he and Mr Brock, the solicitor's clerk, duly witnessed the execution of the document. The vicar intimated his intention to keep the will and codicil for the present, and having, as a measure of precaution, shown the clerk the private drawer in which it was placed, the latter went away.

The uneasiness of the vicar had unconsciously communicated itself to Dr Maitland. There was danger in the coming of Frederick Farmley, and the way the doctor looked at it was different from that of Mr Dalton. Mary, as between the two suitors, was still free; and

would it be considerate—the doctor asked himself—generous towards her trustfulness, to passively allow her to lose that freedom without one more opportunity of exercising it? It was now some time since she had asked Dr Maitland to wait, and she had mentioned no limit. He was honourably justified in asking her if her answer was ready. In another week, in spite of her honesty, she would not be so free, and a decision would then cause her trouble.

On a Saturday afternoon, the 5th of July, while a glowing midsummer sun filled the sky with warmth, Dr Maitland set forth on his anxious mission. He had to pass the vicarage, but did not call. It was between two and three, and it was the vicar's habit to dine at the former hour. A little farther on, the doctor overtook Mary Dalton herself, going homeward from her uncle's house.

'Uncle seemed drowsy,' she said with a bright smile, 'and he likes an afternoon nap, so I came away. But I am coming back again in the evening to cut flowers for the church to-morrow.'

The day being very warm, they walked slowly, and Mary was very gracious and even tender towards her companion. She asked him to accompany her home and wait for tea, and he was thus spared the need of explaining that he was already going to her house. Everything on the way—her warm, half-conscious looks, the manner of her speech, the way she walked close to his side—raised his hopes high with the feeling that he had decided wisely in resolving to ask for her answer to-day. He could not speak until they were in the house; but he was not impatient now: it would be all settled before he came away. Dr Maitland would not fail to go with his news to the vicarage first—if the news, as he hoped, were good. Nay, might they not go together to the good vicar?—for Mary had promised to go back for her weekly task of cutting the flowers.

At five o'clock the moment came. Mrs Dalton left the little drawing-room after tea. After a minute's silence the doctor rose and softly approached the girl, whose instinct told her what was coming, for she started a little, coloured to the eyes, but did not seem afraid of it.

It was just a moment too late. Mary rose quickly, with a little cry. A man came running, hot and breathless, up to the door. The doctor was called for, and, hastening to the door, was asked to hurry to the vicarage with all speed. Imposing silence on the messenger and sending him away, Dr Maitland returned to the drawing-room.

'There is a sudden call for me, and I must go. May I come again? I want to speak to you.'

The composure of his voice did not agree with the pallor of his face. The girl was frightened. She did not know what had happened.

'Yes, please—oh yes—do come again—I am going to the vicarage,' she answered, somewhat wildly and disconnectedly.

There was no time for more words. Dr

Maitland flew with all speed to the vicarage. He was ignorant what had happened. There were a number of people before the door, and passing quickly through them, he saw a constable in the hall, guarding the door of the dining-room. The disciplined nerves of the doctor were not proof against the shock they received. The vicar lay on the carpet, as the agony of death had left him.

HER MAJESTY'S MINISTERS.

By MICHAEL MACDONAGH.

THE salaries and emoluments of 'Her Majesty's Ministers' cost the taxpayers of the kingdom just £175,681 per year, a sum by no means extravagant when we consider the ability and genius of our statesmen, their devotion to duty, and the vastness and wealth of the Empire, which on the whole they govern so wisely and so well. Sixty years ago three times that amount hardly covered the egregious salaries of members of the Government, and what was more reprehensible, the fat sinecures bestowed on needy unofficial members of the House, and even on 'strangers' for party services. A century ago the state of things that prevailed in public life was even more corrupt and venal. Place-hunting was then almost universal amongst public men. 'To grasp a great estate out of the public service was too often their first thought,' writes Sir Thomas May in his *Constitutional History of England*. 'Families were founded, titles endowed, and broken fortunes repaired at the public expense. It was asked what an office was worth, not what services were to be rendered.'

The Prime Minister is the head of the Government, but as such he receives no salary, for his position is unknown to and unrecognised by statute law. Some State office with nominal duties, such as the office of First Lord of the Treasury, is accordingly held by the Premier. Lord Salisbury, however, departed from the almost invariable practice by associating the Secretaryship for Foreign Affairs, perhaps the most arduous and responsible office in the Government, with the Premiership in his own person. The First Lord of the Treasury, or, as he is more fully described, 'First Commissioner for executing the office of the Lord High Treasurer of Her Majesty's Exchequer,' has associated with him the Chancellor of the Exchequer and three junior Lords of the Treasury in the control of Her Majesty's Exchequer; but the post is now a sinecure in the departmental sense, and carries with it a salary of £5000 per annum. The famous house, No. 10 Downing Street, in which Cabinet meetings are held, is the official residence of the First Lord of the Treasury.

The real head of the Treasury, or the department which controls the collection and expenditure of the National Revenue, is the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The salary attached to the office is £5000 a year. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is always a member of the House of

Commons, in which House all proceedings that relate to the public income and expenditure must originate, and is always in the Cabinet.

The 'titbit' of the Administration from the financial point of view is the Lord Chancellorship. The salary attached to the office is £10,000—£4000 as Speaker of the House of Lords, and £6000 as Lord Chancellor. In point of precedence it is also the highest office in the Government. The Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain takes precedence of every other subject of the Queen, except the royal dukes and the Archbishop of Canterbury. The First Lord of the Treasury—who as I have shown is usually the head of the Government—so far from being in point of precedence the first in the Cabinet, is nearly half-way down. So that at a ceremonial function Mr Gladstone, when Premier, would have had to walk behind five or six men whom he had appointed to Cabinet office, and whom he could, in effect, dismiss. Lord Rosebery was First Lord of the Treasury in the late Liberal Administration, but held also the office of Lord President of the Council, which gave him formal precedence before all his colleagues except the Lord Chancellor. The latter office is also the oldest in the Government. It dates back to the time of Edward the Confessor. The Lord Chancellor is besides, as head of the Chancery Division of the Supreme Court of Judicature, the highest judicial officer in the land. As Speaker of the House of Lords, he presides over that House when it is sitting either as a judicial or as a legislative body. It is his duty to appoint all justices of the peace, and he is supposed to exercise a general guardianship over infants, lunatics, and idiots. He has at his disposal an immense amount of church patronage and legal patronage, and, finally, he is 'Lord Keeper of the Great Seal,' and a member of the Cabinet.

The Lord President of the Council presides on the rare occasion that the Privy Council now meets. In past years he was also the president of certain committees of the Privy Council which are now defunct. In 1853 a committee of that venerable body, but entirely composed of Ministers, was appointed to administer the moneys which Parliament voted for educational purposes, and over its deliberations the Lord President presided. Three years later a new office was created—that of Vice-president of the Council—which in time became vested with all the administrative duties of the Lords of the Education Board. Again, till recently, the Lord President exercised all the statutory powers of the Privy Council in connection with the prevention of cattle disease. The creation, a few years ago, of a Board of Agriculture took that work out of his hands and left him with few duties that were not formal. But the office has now been entrusted with novel and important functions. The Lord President of the Council in the present Unionist Administration—the Duke of Devonshire—presides over a national defence committee, which aims at bringing into harmony of purpose the independent energies of the War Office and the Admiralty. The office of Lord Privy Seal is an ornamental survival from the historic

past when the Privy Council sought to restrain the acts of the Crown by insisting that the Lord Chancellor should not affix the imprimatur of the Great Seal to any grant, or patent, or writ the Sovereign desired to issue, without their authorisation in the form of a warrant under the Privy Seal. But in these happy days of Parliamentary Government, the Lord Privy Seal has no departmental duties and no salary. The office is generally bestowed upon some old and eminent peer whose counsel is desired at the deliberations of the Cabinet.

There are five principal Secretaries of State—the Secretary for the Home department, or the Home Secretary, as he is popularly styled; the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, or Foreign Secretary; the Secretary for India; the Secretary for the Colonies, and the Secretary for War. They are always in the Cabinet, and each receives five thousand pounds per annum for his services. The Home Secretary and the Secretary for War are invariably in the House of Commons. The holders of the other Secretaryships of State may be in the House of Lords or the House of Commons; but in either event, the Under Secretaryship, which is attached to each of the offices, represents it in the other House. These Under Secretaries are each paid £1500 per annum. They are never members of the Cabinet.

The duties of the five Secretaries of State being easily understood, require no extended explanation. Until 1854 there were only three Secretaries of State—the Home Secretary, who is responsible for the preservation of the public peace, and the security of life and property in England and Wales, and supervises the administration of the various statutes regulating labour; the Foreign Secretary, who controls all international negotiations; and the Secretary for War, who in addition to administering the affairs of the Army, had to look after Colonial matters until 1854, when the development of our possessions abroad led to the creation of a Secretary of State for the Colonies. In 1858, the year that witnessed the transfer of the powers of the East India Company, or 'John Company,' by Act of Parliament to the Imperial Government, the fifth Secretary of State was appointed to take charge of the affairs of India. It is interesting to note that the law recognises no distinction among the Secretaries of State. The holder of any one of these five offices is simply described as 'One of Her Majesty's principal Secretaries of State,' and theoretically their duties are interchangeable. A Secretary of State must always be in London. Formerly it was also necessary that the 'Minister in attendance on the Queen' should be a Secretary of State. Now any member of the Cabinet suffices to discharge the nominal duties of superintending the issue of any State document by the Sovereign.

The salary of the First Lord of the Admiralty, who is, needless to say, responsible for the Navy, is £4500. The post is regarded, curiously enough, as of lower rank than the office of the Minister for War, who, as we have seen, has the distinction of being a Secretary for State, and draws £5000 per annum. The First Lord, however, is always in the Cabinet.

The Chief Secretary for Ireland gets a salary of £4425. There are also three Irish law-officers—the Lord Chancellor, who gets £8000 a year; the Attorney-general, who is paid £5000; and the Solicitor-general, who gets £2000. They need not necessarily be in either House of Parliament. None of the Irish law-officers in the late Liberal Government were members of Parliament; but in the present Unionist Administration, the Attorney-general and the Solicitor-general are in the House of Commons, and the Lord Chancellor, who has a seat in the Cabinet, is in the House of Lords. The highest paid office in the Administration is that of the Lord-lieutenant of Ireland, who receives a salary of £20,000. But it is a post that few noblemen care to accept for various reasons, not the least being that, like the position of Lord Mayor of London, the allowance is not nearly sufficient to enable the holder to maintain its viceregal dignity. The full title of the Chief Secretary is 'Chief Secretary to the Lord-lieutenant of Ireland.' The Chief Secretary was therefore originally subordinate to the Lord-lieutenant, but the relations between the two have become somewhat inverted during the past fifteen years. Practically, the Chief Secretary is now solely responsible for the Irish Administration, and the Lord-lieutenant, as the representative of the Crown, is not much more than an ornamental and dignified figurehead. The seat in the Cabinet naturally went to the Chief Secretary since the rise of the office in importance. In the present Administration, however, there has been a reversion to the old order of things, so far at least as calling the Lord-lieutenant and not the Chief Secretary within the Cabinet is concerned. The Chief Secretary was also formerly subordinate to the Home Secretary; but he is now independent of all control of the Home Office. He is practically the Home Secretary, the Secretary to the Local Government Board, the Secretary to the Board of Works, and the Minister of Agriculture for Ireland.

Another office of dignity rather than of duty or responsibility, like the post of Lord Privy Seal, is that of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, who exercises in the Royal Duchy the administrative duties, such as the appointment of magistrates, exercised by the Lord Chancellor over the rest of Great Britain. The duties, however, are purely nominal; and the holder of the office is generally a man who is able to come to the assistance of any member of the Administration when hard pressed in Parliament. He may be in either House, and generally has a seat in the Cabinet. He is paid £2000 per annum for his services.

Two of the busiest ministers in the Administration are the President of the Board of Trade, and the President of the Local Government Board, each of whom receives £2000 per annum, and as a rule they are both members of the Cabinet. The former looks after all commercial matters in the interest of the public. He also supervises the working of railways, trams, canals, harbours, and the mercantile marine service. The latter has charge of the public health, and controls our local authorities. The Postmaster-general, who

manages the postal and telegraph services, receives £2500. He is not necessarily a Cabinet Minister. The President of the Board of Agriculture, whose principal duty is the prevention of diseases among our flocks and herds; the Vice-president of the Council for Education, who directs the working of our great system of national education; and the First Commissioner of Works, who has charge of the royal parks and pleasure-grounds, Government offices, and public buildings, are each paid £2000 a year, and may or may not be in the Cabinet. The Secretary for Scotland attends to matters of Scotch administration, and receives £2000 a year. He is now usually a member of the Cabinet. The Scotch law-officers, or the legal advisers of the Government in Scottish affairs, are the Lord Advocate, with a salary of £5000, and the Solicitor-general, with a salary of £2000.

The Attorney-general for England is paid a salary of £10,000; and the Solicitor-general, £9000; but both receive in addition high fees for any cases they may conduct on behalf of the Crown in the law-courts. According to a Parliamentary return published in 1895, the highest amount paid in salaries and fees to the Attorney-general for England in any year since 1880 was in 1893-94, when the total reached £20,285, this being made up as follows: Salary, £7000; fees and contentious business, £12,635; clerks, £650. The lowest point reached during the fifteen years was in 1889-90, when the total was £9179. The highest remuneration received by the Solicitor-general for England since 1880 was in 1888-89, when £6000 was paid for salary and £5056 for contentious business, total, £11,056, while in 1891-92 it fell to £7168. The English law-officers have recently been debarred from taking private practice, but as a solatium their salaries were increased by £3000, or from £7000 to £10,000 in the case of the Attorney-general, and from £6000 to £9000 in the case of the Solicitor-general.

Among the minor functionaries of the Administration are the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, who assists the Chancellor of the Exchequer in revising and regulating the expenditure of every department of the State, and gets £2000 per annum; a Secretary to the Admiralty at a salary of £2000; a Civil Lord of the Admiralty at a salary of £1000, both of whom assist the First Lord of the Admiralty in the work of his department; a Financial Secretary to the War Office, who draws £1500 a year, the same salary as is paid to each of the Under Secretaries to the five principal Secretaries of State—Home, Foreign, War, Indian, and Colonial; and there are Parliamentary Secretaries to the Board of Trade, and the Local Government Board, who receive £1200 each.

Besides the task of appointing to the Ministerial offices, the Prime Minister has the duty of filling up a number of posts in the Royal Household, which like those in the Administration are vacated at a change of Government. The Master of the Horse is paid £2500 per annum; and the Master of the Buckhounds, £1500. The Lord Steward and the Lord Chamberlain are each paid £2000; the Vice-

chamberlain, £924; the Comptroller of the Household and the Treasurer of the Household, £904 each. There are also seven Lords-in-Waiting, each of whom draws £702 per annum; a Parliamentary Groom-in-Waiting at £334; a Captain of the Yeomen of the Guard and a Captain of the Corps of Gentlemen-at-Arms, each at £1200; and a Mistress of the Robes, generally a Duchess, at £500. The duties attached to these offices are of a ceremonial character, and are exceedingly light; but the appointments enable the Government of the day to secure, principally in the House of Lords, the services of men who may be able to assist their party both in and out of Parliament.

But it may be asked, has a Minister anything to look forward to on retiring from office? An ex-Lord Chancellor of England receives £5000 a year; but in consideration of the pension continues to act as a Law Lord. An ex-Lord Chancellor of Ireland gets £3692, 6s. 1d., the penny, like the more substantial remainder of the pension, being duly paid quarterly in farthings. Four pensions of £2000 each may be granted to as many ex-Ministers who, for not less than four years, have been either one or other of the five principal Secretaries of State, or First Lord of the Admiralty; and four more pensions of £1200 each may be granted to ex-Ministers who have filled for not less than six years an office of less than £5000, but not less than £2000 per annum. An applicant for one of these pensions, which were created by the Political Offices Pensions Act of 1869, must make a declaration that it is necessary for his support. The benefits of the Act have been taken advantage of by about ten ex-Ministers. If the holder of one of these pensions for 'political and civil services' should be again appointed to office with salary, he is not entitled to draw the pension while he is in the Ministry.

A member of the House of Commons must resign his seat and seek re-election on accepting office. The only post exempt from the rule is the Secretaryship to the Treasury. This custom was established by an Act of the reign of Queen Anne. The object of compelling a representative to submit his acceptance of office to the judgment of his constituents, was to restrain the corrupt influence of the Crown over Parliament by its power of conferring places of profit on servile and obsequious members. The danger the Statute was designed to avert is now happily past and gone. The Sovereign is still, theoretically, 'the source of justice and of mercy; of all offices, honours, emoluments and chartered rights;' and as such is supposed to confer their offices on the Members of the Administration, but in reality the appointments are solely made by the Prime Minister. It is under him and not under the Crown that Ministers hold office. The Act of Anne, however, continues in operation despite the fact that the complete revolution which has since occurred in our political life has made it entirely remote from the realities of the present time. Several unsuccessful attempts have been made to repeal the Statute. The only modification of the original Act is that

provided in the Reform Act of 1868, by which a Minister who may be removed from one office to another in the same Administration need not seek re-election.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

CHAPTER XXII.—A DELICATE NEGOTIATION.

THENCE I proceeded straight to Robert. Man, I discovered, is in these matters more difficult than woman. Pride, to begin with—well, you shall see how horrid an obstacle was pride. Never before had I understood the ecclesiastical hatred of pride. I went about my business in the grand, or diplomatic style. That is to say, I concealed the real object and worked round to it. I believe that it is always easy to deceive a strong mind. I mean that it is a part of strength to proclaim a purpose and to march straight towards it. It is your weak, knock-kneed persons who, having always to crawl and wriggle for themselves, see through the wriggings of some, and divine the intentions of others.

Robert was at work, of course. Nobody ever found him doing nothing. He looked up, welcomed his visitor, and carefully covered his papers. He never liked any one to know what he was forging and contriving.

'Now,' I said, 'let us talk for half an hour. Then we will go and get some dinner; after that we will stroll about. What are you going to do this evening?'

'I thought of going to Lady Frances.'

'Good. You see her pretty often, don't you?'

'Very often. It is quite impossible to see her too often.'

'Quite impossible,' I replied mechanically, watching his face. He was nervous when he spoke; he took up things and put them down. I had never seen him nervous before.

'I wonder if there are many other women like her,' he said slowly.

'There is no other woman like her in the whole world, my cousin.'

'She understands—that is the extraordinary thing—she understands everything; an argument; a position; a combination—one hasn't to explain or to talk about it—she understands. If she were in the House she would lead it. She suggests a policy; she confers with Ministers; she catches the drift of the public mind; she knows how far we can go, and what we should attempt. George, I declare that I never before imagined it possible that such a woman could be found!' All these things he had said before. Robert was not accustomed so to repeat himself.

'And now you have found her, Robert, and she is your fast friend. Of course, I've known her all my life; she has become a kind of sister, you know, by long habit; but my admiration of her is quite equal to yours. And have you nothing to say about her beauty?'

'She is the most perfect woman I have ever seen,' said Robert, his voice dropping, because when a man feels strongly on such a subject he doesn't like to talk loud about it. 'Tall and queenly: she looks born to command'—the

quality which he most desired for himself he must needs admire in a woman.

'But her beauty, Robert? Her eyes—her face—her features?'

'Yes. I think less of them—that is, of course, they belong to her—they make up the greatness and the splendour of her. If it were not for her beauty she would not be half so queenly.'

'She advises you in your public work; does she talk to you ever of your more private affairs?'

'She knows my history, such as it is, of course. I was not going to her under false pretences. Besides, there is nothing to be ashamed of. I told her at the outset that I am but a Craftsman—a Master Craftsman.'

'Have you told her that you once—a good long time ago—promised to marry Isabel?'

Robert changed colour. 'No,' he said shortly. 'There was no need to tell her that.'

'I think if I were you, Robert, I should tell her.'

'Why? What is the use of telling her such an insignificant fact?'

'Insignificant? Your marriage an insignificant fact to your best friend? Why, Robert, it is the most significant fact in the world. All your future depends upon your marriage.'

'It will not come off for years—I must make my position first. You must know I cannot take upon me for ever so long the burden of a wife—and a wife who would only pull me down instead of helping me up.'

'I know that very well. You want a wife who would help you up.'

'What does Isabel understand about these things? Nothing. What does she care? Nothing.'

His voice showed the bitterness within him. 'Has she shown the least interest in my ambitions? Why, from the very first, she has been content to be my clerk when she might have been my companion.'

'Come—come—you have never given her any encouragement. You never suffered her to think of being a companion. She has always been afraid of you. She is afraid of you still. Robert, I shouldn't like to marry a woman who was afraid of me.'

So it began all over again; but this time with results.

'There is no question of like or dislike, unfortunately.'

'I would let her go before the wedding bells began to ring.'

'You forget, George. I have promised to marry her. I will keep my promise—some day.'

'All very well. But there is her side of the question. Is it fair or right to keep this girl waiting for you year after year—living almost alone in that corner of the earth, wasting her youth, wasting her beauty, longing, perhaps, for love, every year widening the distance between you, while you chafe at the chain you drag, and she droops and languishes in bondage?'

'I must keep my word,' he repeated obstinately. 'And besides, Isabel promised to wait for me as long as I chose. She knows she has got to wait. As for my marrying now, she knows, and you know, that it is impossible.

What have I got to live upon? The money which you paid for your share, and about three hundred pounds a year my share left. Do you suppose that I can marry and live among my new friends on two or three hundred pounds a year?'

'Then let Isabel go,' I repeated, as obstinate as my cousin for once.

'If I do, who is to protect the child? Am I to turn her, penniless, into the street? No, George, I am bound to her; and I must make the best of it. Otherwise——' His head fell.

I became more hopeful. When a man—any man, the most obstinate of men—talks about making the best of it, he would certainly like to get rid of it.

'A man like you, Robert,' I went on, after a bit, answering the thing which was in his mind at the time—there's a diplomatic hint for you: always, if you can, make use of the other man's own mind—'wants above all things a wife who will stand by him, and think for him, and advance him by her influence and her personality. The wife for you, or for any man with such ambitions as yours, should supplement your qualities; she should be well born, well mannered, influential; well considered, beautiful, and rich.'

'Should be, yes, should be. But there is only one such woman that I know of'——

'Yes. There is only one that I know of. Her name is Lady Frances.'

He sprang to his feet and began to walk about.

'What do you mean?' he asked. 'I believe you've got something or other up your sleeve. Out with it, man. Don't let us have any fencing here.'

'I mean that with such a wife as Lady Frances to back you up, and with your own abilities to help you on, you would be quite certain to step into your place in the front before very long—far sooner, Robert, than you can hope to do by your unaided efforts. That is all I mean.'

'It is impossible. There is first—Isabel in the way. You are a good fellow to think about me—I don't believe any other man in the world would do so much for me. But no'——

'Never mind Isabel for the moment. Let us talk only about yourself. Do you—do you' . . . I remembered the stipulation in the other engagement about the foolishness of kisses—did the man when he made that stipulation, understand, the least in the world, the meaning of love? Had he ever felt any kind of love at all for poor Isabel? and I put a leading question.

'Have you the—the kind of regard for Lady Frances which you ought to have for the woman you would marry? I don't mean the kind of regard which you have for Isabel, because she is not the woman you would marry.'

'Man,' he cried passionately. 'You don't know—I haven't told you. Nobody would think it possible that I should have the presumption.'

One has seen the passion of love represented on the stage, with exaggeration, as we think everything on the stage must be exaggerated.

One has read of the passion of love in the older poets, with their own flames, and darts, and swoons, and fierce consuming fires, and ecstasies, and raptures—exaggeration, we say. One reads of love in modern novels, and sometimes we ask how these writers can set down the exaggeration of passion with which they do sometimes regale their readers. Henceforth I declare that I shall never witness a love scene on the stage; never read an Elizabethan love poem; never read a burning page in a novel, and be able to call it exaggeration. Because the confession, the scene, the monologue, the unfolding of a heart which now I witnessed proved to me that there can be no exaggeration in poets and dramatists. Poets cannot get beyond the bounds of possibility in love. They spoke of flames and fires, because there are no words with which to speak of the passion which may sometimes seize and hold the heart. Not only in the nobler natures, in the strongest men, and in the men who have never known before the smarting of love, nor wasted the passion that is in them on objects unworthy.

This man, hitherto so cold to love, so contemptuous of women, now raged about the room like a caged wild beast. It seems a breach of confidence only to hint at his broken voice, his distorted face, his features aflame, but half ashamed, while he confessed the passion which possessed him.

'George!' he cried, 'I worship her. Yes, for every quality that she possesses—for her quickness, for her sympathy, for her insight, for her beauty, for all, for all, I worship her.'

'You do well,' I said weakly. But he regarded not what I said.

'Good heavens!' he went on, 'I count the hours between my visits. I make a thousand excuses to go there. When I reach the door, I remember that I was there only yesterday, and I creep away again. I lie awake at nights thinking of her. The only time when I am not thinking of her is when I am at work, for then I am doing what I know she would approve.'

I murmured something, I know not what.

'I confess to you, George, I want no other music than her voice. I think I could gaze upon her face, and in her eyes for ever, and never grow tired. Only to pass other women in the street makes me angry to think that they look so small and common.'

'They are small and common because they are meant for small and common lovers.'

'You come to think about her beauty, why, I hardly think of it except that it is a part of her, always a part of her; and she is always in my mind.'

'Poor Robert! Yet, perhaps there may be hope; no woman is so far above you as to be impossible.'

'Hope? How can there be hope? Don't talk nonsense.'

'I should think—but then I am not a woman—that love like this—so real—so full of worship, does not come often in the way of a woman. I can tell you, if the fact afford you any hope, that Frances has refused men by scores: she will never marry any man—I am quite sure—she has told me as much—unless

he is a strong and able man. Why should such a woman give herself away to a man of the lower nature?'

'What hope can that bring me? George'—And here he broke out into a torrent of passionate cries and ejaculations. For my own part I kept myself in hand. I let him bring it all out. Every ejaculation, every word of the confession strengthened my position.

'Always in my mind,' he concluded, throwing himself into a chair, 'always in my mind, day and night. There! now you know!'

'Yes—now I know. I have guessed as much a long time. Of course, it was inevitable. You were bound to fall in love with her, from the beginning. That was certain.'

'I might ask why you took me then—if it was certain. But I don't. For I would rather go on hopelessly all my life, than never to have met with her at all. Yes, I have had to thank you for many things, George, but for nothing so much as this.'

'Thank you, Robert,' I said. 'Well, you are in love at last. That is the cardinal fact. Poor Isabel! You never thought of her like this.'

'Never. Poor child! Don't imagine that I ever thought of Isabel in this way at all. I was only sorry for her. I thought that her father was dying—and she was a very good clerk—so I said I would marry her, partly to keep her on as a clerk, and partly to protect her from poverty. It didn't seem to me that it would make any difference to my future. But as for love! How could one love a girl and despise her for her intellect?'

'You have no cause to despise Isabel,' I replied with some warmth. 'Let me tell you that. You never took the trouble to consider her intellect at all. Well—the long and the short of it is that whatever else happens you must let her go.'

'No, she must release herself. I will never go back from my word.'

'Well then, Robert. Here is a bargain. If I bring you her release—by her own wish, written in her own hand; if I show you that she will not suffer but rather gain in the long-run for her release; if I can assure you that she will be the happier for the present by being released—will you let her go?'

Anybody else would have understood at once what I meant. Robert did not. He had not yet acquired the habit of thinking about other people, and their motives and minds. That might come by contact with a sympathetic woman. He told me, afterwards, that it seemed to him the very last thing possible for me to fall in love with Isabel—whom he himself could not love; and to desire to marry a girl without any knowledge of society. Perhaps, being new to the thing, he thought at this moment more than was necessary about society. Perhaps I knew too much of society, and therefore thought too little of its advantages. Besides, I was now a boat-builder, quite disconnected from society, and I really never asked whether Isabel was a woman who might be relied upon to shine at her own receptions, and to receive at her dinner-table the most distinguished people in political circles.

'You make three conditions,' he said. 'Every one of these seems to me impossible. Yet you have a way with you; I do not believe Isabel will send me a release; after these five years she has grown accustomed to consider me as her future husband; she moves in a groove; she considers me as her guardian, and her father as my dependent. No, Isabel will never release me—she cannot.'

'But,' I insisted, 'supposing these conditions to be fulfilled?'

'Oh! if they are fulfilled, of course, I am the last man in the world to keep a woman against her wish. If she would rather marry a foreman of works'—

There was the least touch of coldness; perhaps no man, not even my cousin Robert, likes to be dismissed by any woman.

'That is settled then. And now to return to Lady Frances.'

CURIOUS DRINKS.

By G. CLARKE NUTTALL, B.Sc.

MAN has apparently never been altogether satisfied with the simple beverage that Nature provided to quench his thirst. Throughout the history of the world there seems to have existed a certain dissatisfaction with cold water as a drink, and a tendency to obtain, if possible, a richer, more generous substitute. It is true that nothing actually quenches thirst better than cold water; but it is also true that in thirst, as in all his appetites, the simple appeasing of the desire is too little for man, he demands gratification—pleasure in the appeasing—as well as mere satisfaction. Hence the infinite variety of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks at present in existence. Many a man hardly knows the taste of cold water, and never lets a drop pass his lips from one year's end to another, although he may not venture to echo the bold assertion of the Mongolians, that 'plain water has a malignant influence, and ought on no account to be drunk.' With the modern beverages of civilisation, tea, coffee, cocoa, aerated waters, wines, spirits, and beer, &c., every one is familiar, at least in name, but the question arises, what do men drink who are outside the pale of these beverages; what substitutes have they found for water pure and simple? A little peering into the more unfrequented byways of earth reveals many curious and interesting drinks, some of which are here enumerated.

The Hindus make a highly esteemed beverage from the milky fluid contained in the climbing bindweed, one of the *Asclepias*. Their method is to carefully squeeze out the latex of the plant, and then induce a process of fermentation by allowing it to stand. This beverage is claimed as the original intoxicant of the human race, and the predecessor of the vine, so great an ancestry has it. Under the name of Soma, hymns to its praise occupy a large part of the sacred writings of the Brahmins, and there exalt it into a mighty god who can give new strength and vigour to his devotees, a claim resting on the exhilarating effect it produces on mankind. It is still regarded as sacred, and

at a great annual festival, libations are poured out to Soma, whose boundless powers extend even to the granting of immortality. The ancient Persians also revered it as Haoma.

In certain parts of the world we find the sap of trees pressed into requisition as a satisfier of thirst. Thus Pulque, the favourite drink of the Mexicans, is the sap of the maguey or false aloe (agave). When the plant is on the point of flowering, and all its best energy is directed to flower production, the Mexican cuts and hollows out the flower-stalk, so that the sweet, sugary sap, on its way to feed the bud, is arrested and caught in the hollow. By standing it ferments slightly, and thus is formed a most agreeable beverage. A somewhat different drink, known as Tepache, is made by mixing sugar and water with the maguey sap, and allowing the mixture to ferment for a few hours. Those natives of Mexico whose tastes demand something rather stronger and more pungent, allow the fermentation of the sap to go on for a longer time until it becomes acid and almost putrid.

The cider-tree of Tasmania (*Eucalyptus gunni*) derives its name from furnishing the bushmen with a drink similar to Pulque. Here again in the spring, as the sap rises, the trunk is tapped by incisions made in its bark, and a cool, refreshing liquor flows out of the wounds, which can either be drunk in a natural state, or, as is more usual, be set on one side to ferment into a pleasant beverage.

The sap of trees, flowing in a steady current from roots to leaves and flowers, and bearing with it the nourishment the plant has elaborated for its own consumption, has been recognised all the world over as a valuable drink, though perforce the trees or plants supplying the delicacy vary in different climates. Thus, in Kamchatka, where neither eucalyptus nor maguey could live, the natives have called into requisition the more sturdy birch. Its sap, which is procured, as in eucalyptus, by boring holes in the trunk, is converted, with the addition of hops and sugar, into beer, or by a little different process, into wine. We are told that birch wine has an agreeable flavour and is very wholesome, also that that made in Russia effervesces like champagne. It is recorded that during the siege of Hamburg by the Russians in 1814, almost all the birch-trees in the neighbourhood were destroyed by the Bashkirs and other semi-barbarians in the Russian service, by being tapped for their sap.

In America, a drink is prepared from the pulp of the mucilaginous astringent fruit of Guazuma, a near relative of the cocoa-tree. This pulp undergoes various processes of fermentation, and thus furnishes a kind of beer. Chica is a maize beer made by some of the Indians of the Andes.

Chi-chi is the name given by the Patagonian natives to a rude sort of cider which they brew in the autumn, when the wild apples are ripe. Their method of making it is simple in the extreme; pits are dug in the earth and carefully lined with the hides of horses to prevent any juice soaking into the earth. Then the apples are gathered and thrown into the

pits. They decay and ferment, and their juice provides the material for the grand annual drinking bout of the Patagonian men. The women have learnt by experience what the results of this bout too frequently are; so when it commences they go round carefully collecting knives and other dangerous weapons from the men. With these and with their children they then steal away and hide in the woods until their lords and masters shall have drunk themselves mad, and slept themselves sober again. It is a somewhat sad reflection that these wild apples are the only legacy left by a few devoted Jesuits, who, soon after the conquest of South America, set out to convert the Patagonian savages. The Jesuits took with them various implements of husbandry, and European grains and seeds for cultivation; but they were all soon murdered, and only the apple-trees flourished, propagated, and produced excellent fruit, in a climate more congenial to them than to missionaries.

Dowra, or doro, is a primitive beer, brewed in many parts of Africa—in Nubia and Abyssinia, in Mashonaland, and among the Kaffirs. The method of brewing is much the same in all countries, and is thus described by Mr Bent: 'Corn is soaked in water, and left until it sprouts a little; then it is spread in the sun to dry and mixed with unsprouted grains; then the women pound it in wooden mortars, and the malt obtained from this is boiled and left to stand in a pot for two days, and overnight a little malt that has been kept for the purpose is thrown over the liquid to excite fermentation.' In Mashonaland the women are the chief brewers; in fact, to be a good wife one must also be a good brewer. The beer is always made in the fields, and is often very intoxicating. It must be drunk as soon as it is brewed, otherwise it quickly becomes disagreeable and worthless. A similar 'barley beer' was used by the old Egyptians both as a beverage and in libations to their gods. Xenophon speaks of 'bowls of barley beer in which the grains were floating.'

Of quite a different class of beverages is that known as Kephir, drunk by the people in Caucasus. This is effervescing milk, the effervescence being caused by the introduction into the milk of horny yellowish-brown masses known as 'kephir-grains.' When these grains are moistened they swell up into lumps of a gelatinous consistency. Kern, a scientific observer, studied the nature of these grains from a scientific point of view, and found that they were made up of a rod-like Bacterium and a yeast living together on terms of mutual advantage. On their introduction into the milk, a series of fermentative changes were immediately set up, and the milk was broken up into its constituents. Lactic acid was produced, together with a little alcohol, and a large quantity of carbonic acid gas, the presence of the last named being, of course, the cause of the effervescence.

Koumiss, or kumis, is a similar beverage of effervescing milk. On the Asiatic steppes, the milk usually employed is that of the mares, though the milk of goats and asses is often used too. To European notions, koumiss made

with the milk of mares or goats has a very unpleasant smell, though koumiss made with cow's milk is more palatable. This drink is credited nowadays with valuable nutritive properties in many wasting diseases. It was introduced into England by Dr Jagielski, who, in 1874, claimed, in the pages of the *British Medical Journal*, that koumiss will one day occupy a position in every materia medica, compared with which that of cod-liver oil, stout, beef-extract, revalenta, &c., will be quite secondary.

Lovers of the fragrant cup of tea, as we know it in Britain, would scarcely recognise their favourite drink were they invited to partake of it with their Tibetan brethren, who are no less devoted to tea, made after their own particular fashion. Brick-tea, made at best of the offscouring and dust of tea-leaves, and stems of the tea-plants (though more often of any worthless plant-dust), is used by them, instead of the crisp curly tea-leaves we employ. It derives its name from the dust being pressed into hard, solid, brick-shaped lumps, from which pieces are chipped when tea is to be made. The infusion obtained from brick-tea is harsh, intensely strong and stimulating, and instead of being served with milk and sugar, it is commonly flavoured with mutton-fat and salt. However nauseous the resulting liquid may seem to European nations, the Tartars themselves drink large quantities with great relish; and after finishing their cups of tea they end by eating up the residue of tea-dust as a dainty. Substitutes for tea have been found at different times by settlers in out-of-the-way places. Thus in Tasmania and the Falkland Islands the leaves of certain myrtles have been used to make 'tea,' and from this fact have received the name of 'tea-trees.' The Tasmanian 'tea-tree' is usually a shrub. The leaves are too aromatic to produce a really satisfactory infusion. The 'tea-tree' of the Falkland Islands has less aromatic leaves, which therefore give a more palatable beverage. The leaves of another variety were used for a similar purpose by the crews of Captain Cook's ships, who found this 'tea' passable, though if made too 'strong,' it had an emetic tendency, as has what we call green tea. These leaves, if added to spruce leaves in equal quantity, modify the astringency of the beer brewed from the spruce leaves, and much improve its flavour.

Kava, or ava, is a Polynesian intoxicating drink made by macerating in water part of the root and stem of one of the piperaceae. Formerly it was prepared by women who carefully chewed the plant.

Saké is the national beverage of Japan, and until recent years was the only fermented liquor known in that empire. It is obtained by the distillation of the best kinds of rice. In appearance it resembles very pale sherry, though in taste it is somewhat acid. The best saké is white, but there are many varieties, and the poorer people in Japan have to content themselves with a turbid sort. A glass of saké is drunk at every function and ceremony of daily life; even all offerings to the gods at religious festivals, whether great or small, include a cup of saké. At the annual dinner last

year of the 'Thirteen Club' in London, at which everything was served *à la Japonaise*, a glass of the national beverage was handed round to each guest after the repast, with an intimation that a second could be had if desired. It is reported, however, that there was by no means a run on the second glass, saké seeming to be far less popular with Englishmen than with Japanese. So doubtless, for most, if not all of the drinks mentioned in this short summary, a taste would need to be acquired with much diligence ere they could be drunk with any real satisfaction by the more civilised portions of the earth's inhabitants.

THE COLONEL'S PLAN.

By R. RAMSAY, Author of *Miss Drummond's Dilemma*, &c.

I.

It was Rosebud's wedding.

The little white bride was running down the path with her hand clasped in her husband's. After them raced the six tall bridesmaids, with their faces buried in their bouquets; and over them all stormed a cloud of rice.

The Colonel gave his arm to the bridegroom's mother, and the two proceeded down the churchyard path. Some misdirected showers assailed them also, and Mrs Kennedy laughed shrilly as she shook the rice-grains off her bonnet.

'Quite superfluous,' she remarked, as they found refuge in a carriage, and were driven up to the house.

The dressmaker's apprentice had been in possession during the ceremony, that all the servants might go to see Miss Rose married. She had stipulated only to have a policeman on the lawn, because of the wedding presents, and had propped all the doors and windows wide, that he might hear shrieks if anything should happen, or if her terror of the Colonel's wolves' heads and tigers should get beyond control.

The first carriageful drove up to the empty house, and Rosebud and her bridegroom stood side by side, looking down the long room, smiling.

The bridegroom's mother was a woman with a presence; she sailed up in a rustle of heavy silk, and Rosebud put up her face nervously to be kissed. She was a little bit afraid of her mother-in-law. . . .

The crowd rushed in, and the champagne glasses began their perilous circulation, jingling and tottering. The Colonel had ordered a special brand of a dryness beyond disputing, and it acted like a tonic upon the lady guests, who sipped at it soberly.

Rosebud's billowy satin tail was getting entangled among other people's feet. When she moved, the end of it whisked round suddenly, and caused a great commotion. She looked charming, flushed with the glory of the minute; but there was girlish longing in her eyes when she glanced at the great white cake.

'I want a big piece to dream on,' she whispered, squeezing the Colonel's arm.

'Oh!' said Archie reproachfully, and then she remembered that she was married.

Then she disappeared, a little white, radiant vision, to run down the steps with Archie a little later, and dash through a shower of rice into the carriage that was to take them away together. The white rain pattered on the carriage roof, and Rosebud, putting her head out, smiled and nodded.

'A capital plan,' said the Colonel. He was addressing the aunts and cousins who had come down for Rosebud's wedding, and who were now scattered about the empty rooms. The carriage-drive was white with rice, and some fowls had thrust themselves in below the hedge, and were very happy. Inside, there were crumbs of hard, white icing upon the carpet, and the place looked bare. The afternoon was drawing to a close, and there was to be some kind of dinner sometime; no one knew when or what. The aunts and cousins smoothed out their finery, and stretched their smiles; they were inclined to feel melancholy. But the Colonel was very cheery.

'A capital plan,' said he. 'Old Mrs Kennedy will have the place ready for them. She is going to live with them, you know, and give them hints, which will be jolly for Rose.'

'Humph,' said the aunts and cousins. The six bridesmaids turned away from the window. A great deal of rice had slipped down their necks, and their views of life were not quite so rosy.

'Poor thing!' they exclaimed together.

The Colonel was going to see his daughter. As the honeymoon was over, the birds must be settled in their nest, and he was eager to see his little Rose in the glow and dignity of her new position. Driving into the town, he put up at an hotel, and marched down the street light-heartedly. Archie Kennedy managed the County Bank, and though his 'house' was over a shop, as often happened in Scottish towns, the county came in for afternoon tea, and waited up there for their carriages after concerts, besides showing themselves generally kind; for Archie was well connected.

'Mrs Kennedy?' said the Colonel, stopping to chuckle upon the mat. It seemed such a funny way of inquiring for Rose.

He was taken up-stairs solemnly, and put into the drawing-room, Rosebud's drawing-room. With another chuckle, he put up his glass and looked about him. How Rose used to scold at the shabby old drawing-room at home, a room that not all her fripperies could brighten!

'When I have a room of my own,' she would say, 'it will be all pink and pretty. Pink paper and cushions, and little crooked chairs, and Dresden china. Wait!'

This was, however, not the kind of room that the Colonel had been led to look for. It was long and dark, with heavy blue curtains, shutting out the windows and the sun. The wall-paper was of a dark-blue pattern, and the mantelpiece was covered with peacocks' feathers. Peacocks' feathers, of which Rose had such dread and horror, that she had burnt all there were at home!

The Colonel walked up and down, lost in

astonished contemplation. In his abstraction he knocked over a work-basket that had a table to itself, and stooped to pick up the contents, reels, scissors, socks, and wool, and a big bunch of keys. These keys looked business-like; they clattered much as the Colonel put them back; but he noticed that the basket was old, and the lining shabby: it could not belong to Rose. He straightened himself and wondered.

'Papa!'

She came flying up, in her old, hasty fashion. The door, with its heavy curtains dragging, swung slowly shut behind her.

'How are you getting on?' said the Colonel, drawing her to the light, and smiling. 'Like two little birds in a nest?'

'You have forgotten my mother-in-law,' said Rose. Then she buried her face in his coat and cried.

'What? hey? what?' ejaculated the Colonel helplessly. He had not expected this. Rose lifted her head and smiled, though her mouth still quivered.

'It's all right,' she said. 'Only I—I was rather lonely, and you did not tell me you were coming—and—and—I am so happy.'

She was trying to laugh, but the sound did not ring gaily. The Colonel stared at her, patting her head, and striving to make it out.

'Come into the other room,' said Rose. 'It is so dull and dark in here, and those peacocks' feathers send cold shivers down my back. Come into the other room. She is out.'

'She?' said the Colonel.

'Oh, Mrs Kennedy,' exclaimed Rose hastily. She took him across the landing into the dining-room, the windows of which looked on the street. There was a low chair in one window, a work-table, and a cat.

'I sit here with pussy,' said Rose. 'Then I can watch people go by in the street. And the bank is just opposite. If I look very hard—so,' she pressed her small face close to the glass, 'I can now and then see the top of Archie's head over the wire-blind in the window.'

'Is that the way you keep house, lazy person?' said the Colonel, patting the hand that lay in his own. 'I thought I would find my Rosebud buzzing up and down like a little bee, trotting to the shops, and making wonderful experiments in the kitchen. I was certain you would appear in a big white apron, clattering your keys.'

'I would like that,' said Rose. Her tone was woful. 'But Mrs Kennedy manages. There—there is nothing for me to do.'

She sighed, and then jumping up, began to talk fast and nervously. There was a step on the stair, and along the landing. Somebody looked in.

'My dear Rose, I do think'—

The voice was unpleasant. It was, however, altered as soon as the Colonel was observed. Mrs Kennedy came in smiling, and shook hands.

The Colonel would stay to lunch, of course? and to dinner? She must just go down and speak to the cook.

'You ought to do that, Rosebud,' said the Colonel, pulling at his moustache. 'I shall

speak to Archie.' But Rose gave a little nervous laugh.

'Don't, papa; oh, don't! It would make such mischief; and she would hate me—and I am awfully frightened of the cook!'

'Poor little creature. I am so sorry for her!'

'I know old Mrs Kennedy makes her life a burden.'

'Shouldn't somebody speak to Archie Kennedy?'

'It wouldn't do any good. It isn't as if the old wretch had money. She has got to live with them, and I suppose that is why Mrs Archie puts up with her so sweetly. It can't be helped.'

'Poor Mrs Archie! The old lady's constant nagging must be enough to drive her mad. Did you see how ill she looked?' . . .

The Colonel heard bits of that conversation, for he was sitting behind the talkers' parasols. It sank into his mind along with his own conviction, and Rose's anxious little face.

'Promise that you won't be putting things into Archie's head,' she had once said, when the Colonel had come in and found her crumpled in a little heap on the sofa, sobbing. 'I was feeling a little low, that's all . . . and I would never forgive you. Promise, promise!' and she would not let him go until he gave in.

Rose was a plucky little soul, as she should be, being a soldier's daughter. She would not complain or tell tales, and if she did not show fight, it was for Archie's sake. But the Colonel grew to recognise a little patient droop of her mouth—a droop that she curved up into a smile if Archie came in. This was the Rosebud whose life should have been all summer, who ought to have been the happiest little wife in the country-side.

The Colonel pulled at his gray moustache, and his eyes were troubled. People talked of it, did they? What did they say?

'If only the horrid thing would go and get married, and leave those two in peace!'

'Married! Old Mrs Kennedy?'

'My dear, she would be only too delighted. You can see it in the twinkle of her eye. And it would be a mercy.' . . .

Hum! . . . the Colonel was thinking hard. There was one way out of it. The lines grew deeper across his brow. Those parasols were fluttering with many other parasols, and the talk was of other matters. The Colonel was driving home, and thinking. Light words lightly spoken are not always lightly heard.

The sun went down. A faint mist rose over the soft places in the moors, and the daisies were all asleep. As to the horse, he was going as he liked, and he stopped at the stable gate. The Colonel walked up to the house he had lived in for many years. The flowers the gardener sowed grew in the borders stiffly; but a rose-tree that had been planted long ago had grown all over the wide front wall unclipped, untidied—it had been planted by Rosebud's mother.

There was a dog in the lobby. It was an old campaigner like its master, in its own line; and had probably had a great deal to do with the getting of the many trophies that hung on

the walls. 'Grimming dead things,' as Rose had called them; but she had been early familiar with them, and did not scream at wolves' heads and tigers' jaws.

The look of the house was shabby. The rugs were worn, and the papers faded. It had the air of a man's house, very comfortable to the man, but a blot in the eyes of woman.

'Hum,' said the Colonel, stopping at the stairfoot and looking round. The dog sniffed at his heels, and followed.

There was one room up-stairs that was unlike all the others. The Colonel turned the door handle softly, as if he were on the threshold of some holy place . . . as if the faint, faded scent of roses was not to be lightly breathed. There was a strange silence in there—a silence that did not seem like the mere quiet of an empty room.

'Marguerite,' said the Colonel.

He was speaking to somebody who could give no answer, but his voice was anxious.

'Marguerite, you will not be angry? It is for our little one, our only girl. For her sake alone, my dearest!'

Then he turned and came out again. His face was darkened with resolution, and a decision that had been hard.

Mrs Kennedy and her daughter-in-law sat at the window. Rosebud was gazing across to the Bank, with her hands clasped idle in her lap. The droop in her mouth was very plain. Mrs Kennedy, for her part, was glancing up and down the street, observing her acquaintance, the shops they went into, and the clothes they had on. Her sharp eyes travelled up and down, and her tongue was busy.

'There is that Lorrimer girl. Shocking style! Do you see her hat? I wonder how you can make a friend of such a person; I really wonder, Rose . . . Oh, she is speaking to Dr Smith. He has plenty of time to talk in the street, you see. I cannot understand your preferring him. I have always had Doctor Nivison'—

'Yes,' wearily from Rose.

'Ah, now do you notice how badly Miss Hallam walks? and you admire her? I can't agree with your taste. Look how awkwardly she crosses the street—she is standing on one leg outside Bailey's! There are the Merrimans, your friends. Positively— Oh, who is that odd person with a bouquet! Good gracious, can it be your papa?'

Rose looked up the street. Yes, it was the Colonel marching stoutly along, with a great bunch of flowers.

'How funny! But, my dear, *pray* don't rush down the stairs like that. The servants'—

She only spoke to the tail of Rose's gown, for the girl was flying down to pull back the latch herself.

'Oh, the flowers! how dear and sweet of you,' she cried. The Colonel laughed in an embarrassed manner, but kept hold of his bouquet until they had come up-stairs.

'They are for Mrs Kennedy, if she will care to accept of them,' he said solemnly.

Rosebud gasped.

'You are quite gallant, Colonel,' said the mother-in-law, sniffing at the bouquet. There

was a sudden sprightliness in her tone, and her look was arch. Rose thought she had grown younger.

'Was it a joke, papa?' she said half reproachfully, while Mrs Kennedy retired to put the bouquet in water. But the Colonel shook his grizzled head.

'A joke? My dear child, why should you think so?' he answered stoutly.

It was not long after this that Rosebud, venturing into her mother-in-law's room to ask her something, found her at her toilet-table. She was sitting in front of the glass and smiling; there was a powder-puff in her hand, and one cheek was a brilliant pink.

(To be continued.)

A WINTER VISIT TO A FRISIAN SUMMER-RESORT.

By CHARLES EDWARDES.

It was rather an accident of the weather than deliberate design that took me to Fanö. I had run through from Copenhagen to Esbjerg with as little delay as possible, to catch the Tuesday's boat to England. But when I reached Esbjerg, the sea-captains of that rising, yet still small, port were all in a state of excitement about the ice. A south-west wind had set in, and the drift of flocs from the mouth of the Elbe and the water between Sylt and Rönö and the mainland of Schleswig had formed a pack some six miles long, which threatened to sever Esbjerg's communication with the North Sea for an indefinite period. As Esbjerg was at that time the only port in Denmark with any chance of an open sea, it may be imagined what a shock this south-west wind was to the place. Its quays were piled high, amid the snow, with sacks of hams and tubs of butter, and lading was going on fast enough. But when I asked the captain of the vessel if he meant to be true to the time-table, he almost lost his temper in the heat with which he declared that it was impossible.

That evening, having dined fairly well at Esbjerg's chief hotel (crammed with sea-captains, the colour of a chestnut), I strolled with my cigar down the long breakwater, which is the town's most serious effort in the direction of mercantile eminence. I had the promenade to myself. It was a stormy night—the wooden pier so iced that locomotion on it was not easy. It was also well-nigh dark, save for the faint light of the oil lamps which gleamed at the far end of it, and for the half-moon which showed fitfully among the speeding masses of inky cloud. Yet it was quite light enough for me to see the bustling and grinding field of ice on the southern side of the breakwater. The flocs moved with deadly precision, and their pressure against the huge piles and stanchions of the pier was so great that at times the timbers trembled under the strain. The weaker ones ground themselves into a white paste against the stronger; these latter either rose masterfully upon their victims, or slowly fought their way toward the pier head, where they could join the open channel between Fanö and Jutland, and so seek their fortunes

farther afield. In its way it was a very sensational scene, and I felt it the more, as my hat took flight, and finally settled on one of the moving floes, where I had not the least inclination to venture after it.

From the pier head, once or twice in the gloom, I caught a glimpse of faint lights beyond this reach of ice. These were the lamps of Nordby, the capital of Fanö. Not the public lamps, or even the beacon lights for navigation, but just the oil lamps in the windows of the Nordby houses, set among the india-rubber plants and geraniums with which the Danes love to beautify their houses even in midwinter.

When, later in the evening, I heard that there was a sufficiency of open water between Esbjerg and Fanö for the passage of the tiny ferry-steamer—'wind and weather permitting'—I resolved, the next day, to visit this little island. Fanö, which is Frisian as regards its inhabitants, though Danish in its political connection, has an importance in Denmark quite out of proportion to its size. It is only some eight miles long, by two to three wide; but it is reported astonishingly rich in ships; in summer it is a health-resort (placards of its Cure-house adorn most of the Danish railway stations), and its women cling with laudable obstinacy to certain of their old costumes.

The next day, therefore, the sea-captains growling worse than ever, I found my way to the little ferry-boat. The weather was dismal in the extreme. A high wind blew, with long showers of sleet at quick intervals. But the ferry-boat captain only laughed when he was asked if it was too bad for him. He pulled his oilskins the tighter about him and went to the helm. We passengers (two German bagmen, and three sturdy women with very short, roomy skirts) stood about to leeward, took our drenching bravely, and watched the smart little boat bore its way through the ice till the dark water of the open sea was attained. Fanö was in a mist. In fact, we did not see it even when we were turned off the boat. And for this reason, the island was hugged on the mainland side by a broad fringe of solid ice, which stretched a good half-mile into the channel. The south-west wind had melted the snow on this ice, so that about an inch of water covered it, and it was on this delectable thoroughfare that, with the aid of a ladder, we six passengers were set loose to fight our way to Fanö's sandy shore. The wind was against us. You should have seen one of the Fanö dames when the wind caught her skirts, and seemed likely to whirl her obliquely along the ice into the sea. But the ladies laughed while they shrieked: the ferry-boat navigators also laughed. Nevertheless, it was far from easy to come to an anchor in the Ferry Hotel of Nordby. I, for my part, had been down on the ice half-a-dozen times, and was, moreover, well soaked by the sleet. The Fanö men who adventured to the vessel to help in unloading it, wore irons to their long boots, and had sledges which they pushed before them.

At first sight, Nordby seemed a higgledy-piggledy little place of two-storeyed red houses, with green doors and shutters. A few pretentious buildings rose amid the lesser houses; these,

however, were shut until the summer season. The rain pelted into the narrow, rough, cobbled streets, and made every one who had to be out hurry home with a celerity not always consistent with grace. Thus early I saw something of the Fanö ladies' taste (an inherited one) in colours. They were conspicuous for stiff gowns, either scarlet or brown, bordered with bright green.

Here at the Ferry Hotel I was again instantly in another crowd of sea-captains. There is no mistaking the species. Fine hearty old salts some of them were, bronzed and bearded, and with wrists of iron. A man is a sea-captain, of course, whether he is the hired commander of a trading steamer, or the master and navigator of his own little barque of fifty or sixty tons. Most of these gentlemen were in the latter case. They were not anything like so much out of humour with the weather as their Esbjerg friends. Fanö was their home. In the fine season they go abroad to trade and fish; but in the winter they and their boats lie by. They were drinking schnapps in the hotel, and playing dominoes. I judge this is their chief vocation from November to April. They inhabit snug little villas in and outside the town of Nordby, keep as many parrots apiece as their wives will put up with, and have (according to repute) very comfortable accounts in the local and Copenhagen banks. Here, while they amused themselves, they were being screeched at all the while by a couple of lively green parrots. They were probably as happy as men could be. Certainly their smiles and easy expressions (for all their wrinkles and ruggedness) made them appear so.

I sat with these honest old fellows (we will suppose they were as honest as they looked) for half an hour, smoking, talking, and trifling with a thimbleful of gin. The German bagmen were less at home with them. They bewailed their dampness, and complained about the speech of the Fanö people, which they found harder to comprehend than that of the mainland. Half the sea-captains talked English. It was very forcible English, but that made it only the more picturesque.

Then when the sleet outside again abated, and I had to admit that I did not feel quite so wet as before, the landlord of the hotel was for getting me outside to see something of the island. He seemed to take my visit of curiosity as a personal compliment, and was deeply sorry he could neither talk English, nor understand my Danish, without a mental effort that was positively painful. But I was not to go off alone. There chanced to be in Nordby a young man freshly home from America. This young man was sent for. He proved to be still a-bed—at eleven o'clock. But he was persuaded to arise and deck himself for the career of cicerone. In vain I protested. I did not want the strange young man for a companion. The fact that he was a Danish-American, and kept his bed at eleven A.M., was not calculated to alter my state of mind. But I was given so eloquently to understand by three sea-captains at once, that the young man was so remarkable, so well informed and well connected, and would feel so hurt if I declined his society, that I gave way and tarried for him.

He came at length, a dapper fellow of five-and-twenty, wearing a white-and-yellow satin necktie, and having borrowed an umbrella, he set out with me. Our peregrination was a terrible bore for the pair of us. He was anxious not to get wet, and it began to sleet again the moment we started. 'That,' he said, pointing to a comely cottage with a wind-blown tree before it, 'is my house.' 'My dear fellow,' I said to him, 'pray return to it; there's nothing in the world here that requires an explanation; no antiquities or things of that kind.' 'Oh no,' he replied, 'it is all new; but I shall accompany you. That is our city hall. It is not much of a place; but Fanö (with a light shoulder shrug) is not Minneapolis.' He was from that go-ahead Western city, where he earned four dollars a day as a carpenter. Small wonder he was revered in Fanö. I daresay the white satin necktie with the dandelion spots on it cost him a dollar in the States. It was as likely to dazzle the friends of his childhood, as his tale of earning as much in one day in America as they could in Denmark earn in a week.

We passed a church, a Methodist chapel, a schoolhouse, and one remote cottage among the scrub, and then we were in Fanö's wilds, with nothing but sand-heaps and a tearing wind, with sleet, about us. Trees, of course, do not flourish here, nor does agriculture. It is the sea that Fanö looks to for its prosperity, and its summer air, which seduces a good many stout Germans and others hither to the Cure-house.

When we had walked for a mile and a half among the sand-heaps, we came to the new Cure-house. It was a large red building with towers and an annexe. But it was quite empty. The debris of soda-water bottles in the sand hardly told of the season that was dead, and there was nothing to tell yet of the coming summer. On the other side of it was the sea; or rather, a field of ice, under which the waves throbbed shorewards with a dull, singing sound that was rather melancholy. Black clouds and mist hid the farther horizon. It was not at all gay, and it was almost too bracing to be desirable.

From this cheerless spectacle we turned away, and at once set our faces again towards Nordby. Such of the island as was visible in other directions was merely in its details a repetition of what we saw around us; sand thinly covered in places with a sickly coating of grass that looked at its dismallest with the melting snow about it. A few gulls screamed over our heads, as they allowed the fierce wind to speed them whither it listed. Other signs of life were not; even the Fanö kine and sheep were out of sight: stalled for the winter, or, at least, while the weather held thus boisterously.

My companion assured me that the rest of Fanö differed in no way scenically from what we saw of it. This being so, we were both willing enough to return to Nordby, with its prim red houses, its two or three shops, its barques stuck up for the winter, and looking as if they had done altogether with an active life, and its open and unabashed drains trickling into the sand adjacent to the houses. There is nothing 'loud' about Fanö's attractions; even in the hot summer-time, when the women work in the open, with masks to save their complexions,

and when tourists arrive with each ferry-boat, the life can have nothing of a metropolitan glamour about it.

We found the dinner-table ready for us on our return. The landlord took the head of the table and ladled the soup. He seemed astonished when one of the German bagmen desired a second helping, and when this same gentleman asked that his plate might be replenished with fish a few minutes later, his face was a study. It was a meagre meal, and our conversation was at sixes and sevens: the young carpenter was in no mood to play the part of interpreter, and all the sea-captains had, like good husbands, gone home to dine. Immediately after the meal, my bill was put before me, and I was amused to find that I was charged liberally both for my own repast and the Danish-American's. 'We are wide awake here,' the landlord was made to say through my companion, in reply to some trivial comment of mine. The words elicited from the German bagman a strong echo: 'Ach, yes, they do not go to sleep in Fanö. They think themselves the sharpest folk in the world.'

Towards three o'clock I again faced the stormy outside. The ferry-boat was due across again in half an hour. It behoved passengers for Esbjerg to be on the ice in readiness for it. But it was late in coming, and we passengers, and the porters concerned with the transport of its mails and merchandise, grew sick of tarrying on polished ice in an inch or two of water, in pelting rain, and with a furious wind from the south-west, that kept us slipping to and fro in spite of our most strenuous efforts to stand still. It came at length, however, and another lady passenger was disembarked down the ladder, intensely to her own entertainment. When we were on deck, we had to bide for the unlading of the boat. There was a cargo of new deal benches for the school. It was delightful to see how the wind got hold of these things, the moment it had a chance, and sent them glissading towards the dark water at the edge of the ice, with a speed that almost defied the counter-efforts of the porters, in spite of the barbs to their boots. We left this struggle at its height, and were soon again among Esbjerg's ice-floes.

Fanö is, doubtless, a place that improves upon acquaintance. I could hardly expect to get the measure of its charms during so short and inclement a visit as this. As a parallel case, a man might as reasonably form an adverse opinion of a family whom he visits for the first time and finds under the cloud of a grievous domestic trouble. In the summer, out of question, this invigorating little island ought to be worth the tourist's attention.

'A DAY-DREAM.'

I HAVE sat, silent, dreaming, in the golden sun,
Of gladdening all mankind. And ah, life's day is
done!

Unnoticed, ye who made the sunlight of my day
Without one look of love from me have passed away.

E. H.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 651.—VOL. XIII.

SATURDAY, JUNE 20, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

WHO ARE THE BOERS?

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THE Boers of South Africa are just now objects of considerable interest to the British people, as, indeed, they promise to be for many a year to come. Their history is indissolubly interwoven with the history of South Africa, and during the two hundred and forty odd years of their residence south of the Equator, these strange people furnish one of the most remarkable and interesting of studies. Theirs may truly be said to be a history of arrested progress. In thought and in mode of life the main body of the South African Dutch remain far more in touch with the seventeenth century than with the nineteenth. It may be not unprofitable to trace very briefly the African life-story of these singular people.

The Dutch were not in the first instance the discoverers of the Cape of Good Hope. The old Portuguese navigators were the first to brave the terrors of the Stormy Cape as they called it. In 1486 Bartholomew Diaz doubled the Cape, and pushed his way beyond the present site of Port Elizabeth. In 1497 that great sailor, Vasco da Gama, passed the Cape, and penetrated by sea as far to the eastward as the Mozambique coast. Although the early navigators occasionally touched at the Cape on their way to the Indies, there seems to have been no regular settlement there until well on in the seventeenth century. In 1591 Captain James Lancaster, with an English squadron, visited Table Bay. In 1595 four Dutch vessels, the first fleet to cast anchor in these waters, touched at Mossel Bay, a little to the east of the Cape. From this time fleets of the various nations were in the habit of calling at the Cape of Good Hope for rest and refreshment, obtaining oxen and sheep from the Hottentot aboriginals, and picking up wild fowl, fish, and green herbage. The British may be said to have been the first to take formal possession of the soil of the Cape

of Good Hope. In 1620 Captains Fitzherbert and Shillinge landed there and proclaimed the sovereignty of James I. Their employers, the East India Company, took no further steps to form a settlement, however, and the proclamation lapsed. In 1652 the Dutch East India Company finally took possession of the Cape, and founded a settlement there. Jan Van Riebeeck landed with a number of colonists, and at once set vigorously to work to establish the foundations of Dutch supremacy in this quarter of the globe.

Governor Van Riebeeck and his settlers, isolated as they were, had many difficulties to contend with in the early days of their colonisation. The discipline observed was of the most inflexible kind. Herman Van Vogelaar, Volunteer, for instance, was in the year 1652 sentenced to one hundred blows from the butt of his musket 'for wishing the purser at the devil for serving out penguins instead of beef and pork.' In 1657 Jan Wouters, assistant, was condemned 'for blasphemous injuries against the characters of females at the Cape, including the commander's wife, to beg pardon on his bare knees, to be bored through the tongue, to forfeit his wages, and to be banished three years.' A sufficiently severe array of penalties, surely, for uttering scandal! But the Dutch Afrikanders have always remained extremely touchy in the matter of slander and libel. At the present day, in all parts of South Africa, it is the commonest thing to find inserted in the local newspaper such an apology as the following: 'I, the undersigned, A. C. du Plessis, retract hereby everything I have said against the innocent Mr G. P. Bezuidenhout, calling myself an infamous liar, and striking my mouth with the exclamation, "You mendacious mouth (Jij leugenachtige bek), why do you lie so?" I declare, further, that I know nothing against the character of Mr G. P. Bezuidenhout. I call myself, besides, a genuine liar of the first class. (Signed) A. C. du Plessis.—Witnesses, P. du Plessis, J. C. Holmes.'

This is an actual apology, taken from the columns of a well-known South African paper, *De Afrikaanse Patriot*!

The settlement, which in the first instance was planted at the Cape solely as a place of refreshment for the Dutch fleets passing to the Indies, slowly increased. Wives were presently wanted by the settlers, and a number of young girls were sent from the Orphan Houses and Homes in Amsterdam. It has lately been suggested by Mrs Cronwright-Schreiner (Olive Schreiner), in an article on the Boers, that to these orphans, who became mothers of many of the Cape colonists, is due the lack of sympathy and interest which the Dutch farmers of the Cape now display towards Holland. I can scarcely agree with that theory. These orphans were not the only Dutch mothers at the Cape, and the haven of male and female settlers who once had real homes in the Batavian Republic was amply sufficient to perpetuate the natural love and affection towards the home-land. The gradual decay of that spirit of affection towards the mother-country was more probably due to the difficulties of communication, and the small hope, among the majority of the colonists, of ever being able to return to their native land. They turned to South Africa as their true home and abiding place, and in process of time they developed for their adopted country that passionate love and affection with which every Dutch Afrikaner now regards it. Moreover, as the colonists moved ever inland, and became more and more isolated from civilisation, and from communion with the mother-country, the home instincts of the first settlers became gradually outworn and forgotten.

The settlement of the back country proceeded at first very slowly. In 1670 there were only some ninety of the Dutch East India Company's servants who had been granted their discharges, and had, with the encouragement of the Company, taken to farm-life. These ninety men—Dutch mainly, with a few Germans and Danes—may be regarded as the true ancestors and forerunners of the present race of South African Boers. The word Boer, by the way, is not, as some suppose, a term of reproach. It signifies simply a farmer, or a tiller of the soil, but is pronounced as the English *boor*, which word meant originally nothing more than 'agriculturist.'

In 1672 the Dutch East India Company purchased from the Hottentot chiefs, who claimed to be lords of the soil, the whole vast tract of country stretching from Saldanha Bay to the Cape peninsula. The nominal consideration for this concession was—to the Hottentots—£1600 in goods, but it seems that the actual cost to the Dutch was no more than £9, 12s. 9d.! Unfortunately, this nefarious sort of bargain with the black man has not been unknown to British colonists. It obtains, to the discredit of Europeans, down to the present hour.

Between 1685 and 1688 came a most important accession of strength to the Dutch settlers. Thanks to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV., large numbers of Huguenots were driven from France. By arrangement with the authorities in Holland, it came to pass that some of these French Pro-

testants, to the number of between two hundred and three hundred, were taken to the Cape. They were granted free passages, as much land as they could bring under cultivation, and were assisted with money to buy implements, seed, and other necessities, on condition of thereafter repaying the same. These French Huguenots, nearly all steady, honest, and God-fearing folk, became a source of great strength to the rising colony. They planted vineyards and fruit gardens, introduced irrigation, and by the year 1714 had firmly established the wine industry, and made the Cape famous for its wine-producing capabilities. Thanks to the vigorous repression of the Cape Dutch authorities, these Huguenot settlers found it impossible to perpetuate their separate nationality in South Africa. They were incorporated, perforce, in the Dutch Reformed Church, and the use of French in official matters was forbidden. The young were to be taught in Dutch, the reading of lessons at the church services in French was presently suppressed, and every effort was made to obliterate the nationality of the new settlers. So completely successful was this policy that, within a hundred years of the Huguenot landing, the French language had completely died out, and there was but one old man who remembered it. Resigning themselves to their fate, the Huguenots intermarried with their Dutch fellow-settlers, and in no long time became as completely Boers in thought, language, and sympathy as any of their neighbours.

Among the French names which at the present day may be found widespread throughout South Africa, from the Cape to the Zambesi, are Marais, Joubert, Du Plessis, De Villiers, Le Roux, Malherbe, Du Toit, Malan, Retief, Jourdan, Theron, Hugo, and others. Some of these are so pronounced as to be unrecognisable. De Villiers, for instance, is pronounced by the up-country Boers De Filyee; while the name Valjean has been radically altered and is now spelt Viljoen and pronounced Filyune. Although at the present day their names, and occasionally their features and dispositions, betray their French origin, every man in South Africa bearing these Gallic patronymics is as completely Boer as any of his fellow-colonists owning names of the purest Netherlands origin. Their prejudices are also, to the heart's core, as purely and essentially Afrikaner Dutch. The name of the Transvaal President, by the way, is usually pronounced 'Krieger,' with a hard but extremely guttural g.

Only by slow degrees did the settlers penetrate into the interior of what is now Cape Colony. Some of the early governors, it is true, sent expeditions to the north to spy out the land and make discoveries. Some of them even accompanied the expeditions themselves. There is a quaint account in the Cape archives of the journey of Simon Van der Stell, governor from 1679 to 1699, towards the Namaqua country. The expedition had not proceeded very far upon its course when it was charged and put to flight by a huge rhinoceros. At that time, and for more than a century after, the Cape settlers were seriously inconvenienced by the extraordinary profusion of wild animals in every part of their country.

In 1714 the free burgher population of the Cape settlements amounted to no more than 647 men and 341 women, with 467 male and 484 female children. The colonists had long been chafing against the arbitrary, selfish, and unfair restrictions put upon them by the Dutch East India Company and its officers. They could only buy goods through the Company at its own price, and the produce of their land, in the same way, had to be sold to the Company at fixed rates. This same produce was thereafter sold by the Company at vastly enhanced prices to the ships of various nations putting in at Table Bay. The severest penalties were enforced against persons attempting to evade these regulations. It may, indeed, almost be asserted that the early Boers of South Africa were driven to their nomadic, wandering ways by the persecution and tyranny put upon them by their hard masters, the Dutch East India Company.

During the last century the Boers spread far and wide into the Cape Colony, traversing pathless deserts, waterless karroos, and difficult mountain country, in search of new homes and pastures. Many of them were hunters pure and simple, and followed the elephants for their ivory. As they moved inland, magistracies were tardily established in their midst, not lest they might lapse into utter barbarians, but to enable an anxious Government to draw its taxation from the land on which they settled. Churches and schools followed the settlers yet more tardily.

It may be said that since the admission of the Huguenot element into the settlement at the close of the seventeenth century, there has been little addition to the strain of Dutch and French blood which mainly composes the present race of South African Boers. At a fair computation the Boer of to-day is two-thirds Dutch, one-sixth French, and one-sixth German or Danish. At the time of the Huguenot landing there was also an assisted immigration of Dutch settlers to the Cape. There have since been few large additions to the original stock; and it is curious to find among the considerable Dutch Afrikaner populations of the Cape Colony, the Orange Free State, and Transvaal, how few names are represented. It is probable that less than three hundred names would exhaust the patronymics of all the Boers of South Africa. These names are far spread; and undoubtedly one of the great bonds of sympathy which link the Dutch colonists of the Cape with their kinsmen of the Orange Free State and Transvaal lies in the fact that they are all closely—one may say inextricably—allied by blood and marriage. It should be remembered to the credit of these people, during their endless wanderings from farm to farm, from veldt to veldt, and from country to country, that they have preserved pure and unmixed their European blood. There is no strain of the black race among the Boers of South Africa.

In the same way, far removed though they have been from churches and pastors, they have yet clung closely to the primitive faith of their forefathers.

Wherever they have trekked, the great Dutch Bible—often more than two hundred

years old—and its lessons have gone with them. At morning and at night, wherever they may be, prayer and thanksgiving are invariably offered up. It is the fashion among the 'Citlanders' to ridicule the long and somewhat dreary prayers of these Dutch farmers; yet surely it is to the credit of the Boers that, amid every danger and difficulty, they have thus preserved their faith. Even when marching to fight the Zulu hosts under Dingaan in Natal, they offered up prayers at every halt, and the 400 farmers who met and conquered 10,000 Zulus at the Blood River in 1838 attributed their astounding victory to the direct intervention of the Lord of Hosts in answer to their supplications.

In 1796 the British, by arrangement with the Stadtholder of the Dutch Republic, then a fugitive from the armies of the French Republic, took possession of the Cape, which in 1803 was handed back to the Dutch. In 1806 the British, being then at war with the Dutch, again took possession of the Cape Colony, after a severe struggle near Cape Town. From that time the Cape has been continuously in the hands of Britain. At that period the European population of the Cape settlements amounted to 26,720 souls, the bulk of whom were of Dutch descent. The Boers have large families—from ten to fourteen children is not an uncommon number—the climate is exceedingly healthy, and the Dutch all over South Africa have largely increased since 1806. In the Cape Colony at the present time there are between 230,000 and 235,000 Dutch Afrikaners, or Boers. In the Orange Free State there are some 70,000 Boers; while in the Transvaal, or South African Republic, there are—as far as can be judged from the last census of 1890—about 85,000 Dutch Afrikaners. People who know little about the subject talk very glibly about turning the Dutch out of South Africa. That is a matter of impossibility. The vast majority of the Boers are rooted firmly to the soil; they care for no other occupation than pastoral farming; and they are not in the least likely to quit the fatherland in which they have been born and bred for two hundred and fifty years past.

There are, unfortunately, people of British blood who seem burning to force on a war between British and Dutch in South Africa. These people are few in number, but they have to be reckoned with. It may be well to remind them that in the Cape Colony the Dutch Afrikaners (or Boers), who have for many years been loyal and contented subjects of the British crown, far outnumber the British settlers. In the Cape House of Assembly, it is well to remember, the Dutch farmers have a large majority. In the Orange Free State Republic the population is almost entirely Dutch. In the Transvaal the Boers probably outnumber the British, in spite of the gigantic growth of Johannesburg.

The early Cape governors were not remarkable for their sympathy or friendliness for the Dutch settlers, and the grievances of the latter were seldom listened to. The fathers of the present Dutch population in the Transvaal and Orange Free State quitted their homes in the Cape

Colony, and trekked into dangerous and unknown deserts to avoid what they conceived to be gross and burning wrongs. All these facts ought to be remembered in an estimate of the present situation in South Africa. We here expressly avoid discussing the questions at issue between the Transvaal Government and the Uitlanders.

A LOCAL VIEW.

CHAPTER III.—THE FLOOD AND THE EBB.

THERE were two newspapers published in the town of Croham, and nothing could testify more strongly to the kindly and respectful feeling with which Mr Dalton's memory was regarded, than the manner in which these journals, mutually hostile in most matters, set themselves against any attempt to make a sensation of the sad occurrence of the 5th July. There was material enough for sensation, but it was judiciously and even reverently dealt with by those who gathered the particulars.

Dr Maitland hardly required a second glance to perceive that the vicar's death had been a violent and painful one. The deadly agent had been strychnia. An empty wine-glass on the table by the easy-chair had contained the poison. How it had come there, in the wine Mr Dalton had been sipping, the doctor did not stop to conjecture. He ascertained that life was extinct, and divined the cause, before bestowing a half-dazed look round the apartment. He raised the wine-glass to his lips and quickly put it down again. But there was something still more remarkable, on which the constable's eyes were fixed in official amazement. A small revolver lay on the table, behind where the vicar had been sitting (with his back towards the door), and the five chambers were loaded. The weapon had not been used; but there it lay, in that peculiar position.

On realising the situation, as far as this hasty examination enabled him, the first thought of Dr Maitland was about Mary Dalton. She had left her uncle in that chair, drowsy after dinner with the heat, at about a quarter to three. Although no shadow, other than that of the grief of this shocking event, could fall upon the unconscious girl, the mere imagination of such an accident was appalling to the doctor. It would be dreadful if she should even be called upon, as the last person known to have been with the vicar, to describe how she left him, herself occupying a position from which it would be almost impossible to dissociate at least silent suspicion.

The housekeeper, Mrs Atkins, who was prostrated with the shock of her master's death, was summoned by the doctor. Her daughter appeared behind her; and they looked distraught enough to dissuade any one from questioning them, had not the questions Dr Maitland desired to ask been few and simple. The constable had already heard their statements, and he now attended silently to what they said in answer

to the doctor. It was exactly what they had said to the officer of the law.

'When did you discover Mr Dalton's death?'
'Immediately. I got back from the town—the town of Croham—before five o'clock.'

'Had you left nobody in the house, except your master?'

'No one, sir. Jenny (my daughter) came with me to Croham, to carry some things I was getting for the house.'

The doctor personally knew that it was not uncommon for the vicar to be alone in the house when his 'establishment' went to the town on housekeeping affairs. In warm weather like the present every door and window was left open. The house was about thirty yards back from the road, from which the lawn was divided by a low railing.

'At what time did you last see Mr Dalton, Mrs Atkins?' Dr Maitland asked, with an interest he could scarcely conceal; and if anything could have given pleasure to him that moment, it would have been the woman's prompt answer.

'At three o'clock, exactly—the church clock was striking when I came to say we were starting for the town; and Mr Dalton took out his watch and looked at it.'

'Did he appear ill at all?'

'No, sir; he was reading a newspaper, with a half-glass of wine near him on the table: it was not long after Miss Mary had gone away.'

In answer to a further question as to whether there had been anything else on the table, the woman firmly declared there was not. The decanter had been put away, she thought, by Miss Dalton, for Mr Dalton never took a second glass of wine. Nothing remained on the table except the wine-glass.

Further than this the doctor did not feel it to be his duty to go. He told the constable that the vicar had been killed by strychnia, and by a more than usually strong dose, and that the poison had been in the wine-glass. The rest it was the business of others to investigate.

Dr Maitland walked away from the house with a heavy heart. He was going back the way he had come; the duty was his to communicate the news to Mary Dalton and her mother. From the bottom of his heart he prayed that he might not meet the girl on the road—coming to the vicarage, with the dread knowledge of what had happened; or, perhaps worse still, ignorant of it. Should he meet her, he anxiously asked himself whether he would be able to dissemble until he got her back with him to her mother's house?—because, independently of other things, if she knew nothing yet, on what pretence could he turn her back with him without exciting her suspicions? The public road, under the glaring July sun, was not a place for what he had to tell her.

It was singular, whether due to accident or considerateness, that when he arrived at Mrs Dalton's house, no news had reached there before him. He was the first to break the intelligence, and he did it with all tenderness; but his recollection of the scene was ever afterwards very indistinct. Into the sorrow

of that darkened cottage, after the doctor left them, we need not seek to look. A friend—more than brother, more than father, full of solicitous affection, the good vicar had been to those two women.

Now, the fact known to all persons, that the vicar's gentle life had been as loving and delicate and sinless as that of any mother or maiden in his parish, invested the circumstances of his death with incomprehensible mystery. No one could conceive his having had an enemy to desire his death, or compass it. It was still less conceivable that he could have taken his own life. The hypothesis was rejected as absurd and monstrous—nearly as much so as the suggestion of murder. The theory of misadventure only remained. This, too, was surrounded with elements of mystery. All inquiry failed to ascertain in the smallest degree how the fatal drug came to be in the house, when or where it had been procured, and by what imaginable mischance it had got into the wine—after a portion of the latter had actually been drunk. In an ordinary case, murder or suicide would at once have been suggested by the circumstances; but the case of the vicar of St John's was not an ordinary one, and those who were best qualified to judge—his neighbours and flock—distinctly, and indeed indignantly rejected both hypotheses. The official zeal of the police was checked by the emphasis of public opinion; and under the cloud of a verdict of 'death through misadventure,' the tragedy of Mr Dalton's end passed into local history.

Certain points had, indeed, for a moment seemed to question the general conviction, but they did not appear palpable enough to affect the conclusion. It is not intended to do more than mention them in this place, as they may be heard of again. One was a report that some men working on the road a quarter of a mile from the vicarage, towards the open country, had observed a tall woman in a long gray cloak, and wearing a bonnet and veil, coming from the direction of the church on the afternoon of the 5th of July. But there was difference of opinion as to the hour—whether two, or three, or four; it seemed to be some time within these hours. The woman had turned into another road, with the manner of one who knew her way. This was all, and it received little attention, seeing that many women might have come along the road from Croham that Saturday afternoon; and it seemed idle, even to the police, to examine all the housewives in the neighbourhood on so flimsy a clue. Had the alleged female seemed strange to the locality, and made an inquiry as to the way, the matter would have worn a more suspicious complexion.

The other perplexing point was the loaded revolver. It was found on the table, undischarged, not by the dead man's side as he would have been sitting in his easy-chair (the position the wine-glass occupied), but behind his shoulder. He might have had such a weapon in the house without any person's knowledge, and might have been examining it from curiosity. For some unexplained reason, which was sufficiently satisfactory to a pre-

disposed public, little was said about the pistol, and the matter dropped into the same darkness with the rest of the affair.

On the Tuesday after his death—the inquest having been reverently held the day before—the parish of St John's laid their late vicar in his grave under the shadow of the church.

Had it not been for the immunity with which the sanctity of grief surrounded her, or had Dr Maitland been less considerate and respectful than impulsive, no moment had yet been when Mary Dalton was so ready to lay her head upon his breast as during some thirty minutes which she spent alone, after the funeral, in the still darkened drawing-room of the vicarage. The softening and dissolving influence of sorrow and affectionate remembrance was full upon her heart. The vanished face was in the accustomed chair; there was the piano he had bought for her; the little pretty tridles he had loved her hands to arrange reflected his happy smile. The touch of sad recollection awakened every feeling of undutifulness, of ingratitude, which so sensitive a time is calculated to excite in a grateful and loving nature; and if at that moment one whom the vicar had liked so well as Dr Maitland had come to her, touching again ever so gently the chord that had begun to tremble lately in her heart, she would have been impelled to throw herself and her sorrow on the refuge of his love, for the sake of the dead as well as for that of the living.

The propitious hour passed by, and he did not come. He was waiting by the grave to see the turf laid over it.

Mr Fairfield, the solicitor, was in Paris at the time of the vicar's death, and in answer to a telegram from his clerk, had only returned in time for the funeral. As Mr Dalton had not sent back the will, the confidential clerk, Mr Brock, with a telegram of instructions from the solicitor, presented himself at the vicarage late on the Saturday evening, and in the presence of the police sealed the room known as the study. It was only opened after the funeral, in the presence of Mrs Dalton, and of Mr Fairfield and the vicar of Croham, who were the trustees appointed under the will. The clerk, Mr Brock, attended to point out the drawer in which he had seen the documents locked by Mr Dalton. Mr Fairfield then dismissed him and opened the drawer, where he found the envelope.

IMITATIVE ODOURS.

EVERY year, essences and odours for the toilet increase in variety, changing with every turn of Fortune's wheel. Though flower-farming is one of the most important industries of Southern Europe, employing, as it does, thousands of women and youths, it is quite insufficient for the needs of the perfumer.

To take only one odour which will never go out of fashion. Millions of violets, 'sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,' nestle at Grasse and Nice under the gray shadow of the orange groves, yet the two hundred thousand pounds

of this flower, sacrificed every year to the flower press, are not sufficient for the toilet. The perfumer is glad to fall back on the intense violet odour of 'Cassie, sweet to smell,' for sickly as its scent is when used alone, it gives the indispensable note to many bouquets, and is longer available than the violet, the blossoms of *Acacia Farnesiana* being successive, while those of its better known floral ally are quickly over. There cannot be a greater contrast than that existing between the lowly tufts of the Parma violet, and the tree fifteen feet high, with its stem thick as a man's wrist, and its branches six feet long. Yet the blossoms have the same characteristic odour. Cassie, too, the flower-farmer's latest crop, forms a fitting introduction to the violet harvest, occurring as the former does in November and December, while the purple shadow of the latter is not seen under the olives till the beginning of February. Both odours are obtained by the characteristic *enflourage* system; pure, inodorous lard being placed on sheets of glass, and covered with flower petals. Forty or fifty of the trays are then piled on one another, till the lard is charged with their perfume, the flowers being changed from thirty to forty times before the *pommade* is considered sufficiently scented.

The fat thus obtained is packed in airtight tins, and from it, through the medium of rectified spirit, the perfumer prepares his *extraits*. A more delicate process is now being resorted to; coarse cotton cloths, *molletons de coton*, being soaked in the finest almond-oil, and laid on a frame of wire-gauze. Fresh flowers from time to time are thrown on these cloths till the oil is violet-scented. Another way of obtaining the odour is to pass an alcoholic shower through several layers of freshly gathered flowers, placed in a sort of sieve, beneath which is a receptacle—a process called the *nyrogene*. Three species of *Iris*, *Iris germanica*, *Iris pallida*, and *Iris florentina*, are grown on Tuscan flower-farms, and in Calabria, to furnish the violet-scenting orris of our sachets. The rhizome, or creeping underground stem, when freshly dug, has indeed an earthy scent, but after two years it acquires the characteristic indispensable violet odour, and is used, not only in the preparation of sachets, but also in the preparation of Jockey Club and other bouquets. A violet-scented ally of *Acacia Farnesiana*—the myall wood of the deserts of East Australia, which retains the characteristic odour so long as it remains unpolished—the pure white violet-scented anemone of South Australia, the violet-scented lily from Buenos Ayres (the *Pritelia uniflora* that is now making its way into our spring borders), two orchids (*Dendrobium heterocarpum* and *Oncidium oriostrum*), and the young green parts of the reed-like 'scented palm' of Brazil—have also this much-coveted odour, and may possibly, as the demand increases, be impressed into the perfumer's service.

The rose, the queen of flowers, that has been said to preserve 'all the fragrance of summer when summer is gone,' yields its fragrant attar or 'otto' to the villagers of Turkey and the peasant proprietors of Grasse, Cannes, Nice, and the Valois in no niggardly quantity. Yet the true otto does not satisfy the needs of the toilet. Pure attar of roses is of extreme rarity, and is worth its weight in gold, the rose attar of commerce being largely adulterated with sandal, or with otto of rose geranium, which is largely grown for the purpose in France and Turkey. The characteristic rose scent is shared by *Paeonia albiflora fragrans* (an ally of the lovely rose-scented China paeonies of our gardens), the root of *Rhodiola rosea* (a species of *Sedum* growing on damp rocks on the high mountains of Scotland, Ireland, and in the North of England, and on sea-cliffs), and by the rasped wood of the Brazilian tulip-tree.

A small quantity of genuine white lilac scent is annually obtained from Southern France by the *enflourage* system; but the perfumer in this case does not hesitate to avail himself of substances really forming a bouquet. He adds to a mixture of tuberose and orange-flower *pommades* a minute quantity of oil of almonds, and a little civet to give permanence to the scent on the handkerchief.

Another delicate odour, heliotrope, is obtained in small quantities from the heliotrope hedges of the Riviera by the process of *maceration*, a quantity of very pure lard being placed in a copper vessel with the flowers, and melted over a slow fire. The flowers are then strained away, a process repeated till the fat is sufficiently flower-scented, when the liquid fat is poured through a sieve, and the greasy flower paste subjected to hydraulic pressure. Since heliotrope blossoms must be used as soon as they are gathered, and the melted grease carefully kept at the lowest temperature that will maintain it in the liquid state, the perfumer accepts as a substitute *heliotropine*, the white light crystalline powder obtained from the ground pepper. Even if these difficulties of manufacture were avoided by the *nyrogene* or *enflourage* systems, pure heliotrope essence could never become a popular perfume. Heat injures it. The direct action of sunlight destroys it. Artifice replaces it with a mixture of the spirituous *extraits* of vanilla, ambergris, rose, and orange-flower, to which are added a few drops of essential oil of almonds.

Lemon verbena is a plant whose otto is sometimes extracted by the process of distillation, the leaves being covered with distilled water, and the still-head linked down so that the joint is vapour-tight. The still is then connected with a condensing worm, and a fire being lighted underneath, the otto and vapour of water distil over, are condensed in the worm, and pass into a receiver, the oil forming a layer on the top of the water, from which it is readily removed. The perfumer seldom avails himself of this source, preferring an artificial method, the mixture of oil of lemon grass with rectified spirit. The 'verbena' otto, so much used in the manufacture of Eau-de-Cologne, it must be remarked, comes, not from the verbena, but from the leaves of a species of

coarse grass, *Andropoe citratus*, the peculiar odour of which occurs in several species of the Australian Eucalyptus.

Lately, a lady flower-farmer in Lincoln has succeeded in getting some good examples of natural wallflower *pommade*, but the scent usually sold under that name consists of a mixture of *extraits* of orange-flower, vanilla, orris, and cassie, to which a few drops of essential oil of almonds are added.

Similarly, narcissus scent is carefully made up from the *extraits* of tuberose, jonquil, surax, and tolu, and although a small quantity of jonquil *extrait* is prepared from the flower, by treating jonquil *pommade* with grain spirit or spirit of wine in a steam perfumery churn, or *batteuse à extraits*, the scent usually known by that name consists of *extrait* of jasmine, mixed with tuberose, orange-flower, and vanilla *extraits*. There are, indeed, jonquil plantations round Grasse, but each of the four or five yellow blooms that appear on each stem towards the end of March has to be carefully picked off at the calyx; the crop is uncertain, and the harvesting period is very short.

Eglantine is another blossom which cannot be said to repay the flower-farmer for its collection. The perfumer counterfeits it with a mixture of rose, cassie, and orange-flower *pommades*, rose-spirit, neroli, and lemon grass.

Magnolia, again, is a blossom too large and scarce to be cultivated by the flower-farmer, but can be imitated by the addition of a few drops of the *ottos* of citron, zeste, and almonds, to the spirituous *extraits* of orange-flower, rose, tuberose, and violet.

Myrtle, 'the flower of brides,' is seldom sought by the lover of essences. A hundred-weight of the leaves of the common myrtle yields only about five ounces of the volatile oil. Hence a substitute is found in a mixture of the *extraits* of vanilla, orange-flower, tuberose, and jasmine.

The gardenia is counterfeited by a skilful mixture of orange-flower and tuberose *extraits*; the clove pink by dissolving balsam of tolu in a small quantity of solution of potash.

Lily of the valley scent, again, is a complex odour formed by a mixture of the *extraits* of tuberose, jasmine, vanilla, cassie, and rose, to which are added a few drops of the indispensable oil of almonds.

Honeysuckle perfume is composed of rose, tuberose, vanilla, and tolu *extraits*, together with a few drops of the *ottos* of neroli and bitter almonds; while a similar odour, that of the sweet pea, is counterfeited by combining the *extraits* of tuberose, orange-flower, rose, and vanilla.

Passing to purely chemical substances; terpenol, a colourless, strongly refractive oil, obtained by the oxidation of turpentine, has the characteristic odour of the hyacinth, and is its substitute; while chloride of sylvestrine possesses the rather crude scent of bergamot, formerly obtained by the *écuelle*, or metal cup covered with spikes, but now obtained by squeezing the unpeeled fruit with the right hand against a clean sponge held in the left.

We have seen that many of the characteristic odours of flowers can be counterfeited. It must

be remembered that more than one kind of scent is often liberated at the same time from a flower, the scent of honey in particular frequently combining with some other odour.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

CHAPTER XXII. (continued).

HE shook his head. 'Oh, that is hopeless.'

'I am not so sure. Consider the thing from a political point of view. You offer yourself, with your career; she brings herself, with all that it means—an immense contribution. Perhaps she may think in her modesty that your side of the balance lifts up her side.'

Robert shook his head again, but with less firmness. The shaking of a man's head is a most expressive gesture, because there are so many shades in it.

'Next, we will consider the situation from a personal point of view. Frances is in every way admirable and delightful, it is true.'

'Yes,' he sighed. 'Admirable and delightful.'

'But you, my cousin, are not a bad specimen of a man—well set up, and well looking, and well mannered. And you are a masterful kind of creature, and women admire masterfulness in a man. And you have already shown cleverness, and women admire cleverness.'

'Yes. It is all very well, but'—

'And then the lady is a young widow, her own mistress; free to please herself, and she has shown herself difficult to please. She is wealthy, and'—

Here he jumped up again. He was very jumpy this afternoon. 'Yes,' he cried, 'she is wealthy, and there—there you have the whole difficulty. We will suppose that she might possibly get over the differences of birth and rank, and all that, because they mean nothing.' You perceive that Robert was as yet imperfectly acquainted with the true inwardness of things—birth and rank to mean nothing? Dear me! And to hear these words from my own pupil! 'They mean nothing,' he repeated. 'She is the daughter of an Earl, and I am a boat-builder. What do I care about that, eh?' He turned upon me quite fiercely. 'As if that could be any real obstacle. I am a man, I say—he snorted in his wrath—I say, a man in whom a woman may take pride. I know that very well. I believe that even Lady Frances though she is—all that she is—might take a pride in me. Lesser women,' he added, with his usual arrogance, 'would. Of course they would.'

'Well, then, what bee have you got in your bonnet now?'

'Can't you understand? You say she is rich. I know she is rich. And that's the real obstacle. As for the rest, I have thought over all that you said by myself. Only I liked to hear it from you as well. It's the money, George.'

'What about the money? Now don't go raising foolish ghosts about Frances' money. What if she is rich? What does that matter?'

'I have tried to get over it, and I can't. One must keep some self-respect. George, how

would you like to live in your wife's palace—your wife's, not your own?"

'Her country-house isn't a palace.' But it is, as Robert knew.

'How would you like to be every day sitting at your wife's table, not your own, drinking your wife's wine—not your own; waited on by your wife's servants—not your own; spending the money that your wife—your wife—chose to give you? No, I could not—I could not—say no more about it. I would rather remain as I am, and go on thinking about her without hope all my life, than marry her for her money—for her money! Pah!'

'If you come to that, you must just as well say to another woman: "How would you like, all your life, going about enjoying honour—not your own, but your husband's, a name not your own, but your husband's?"'

'Nonsense,' said Robert; 'the things are not parallel. Of course a woman may take all that a man has to give.'

'And a man all that a woman has to give.'

What was it my solicitor had told me? 'Marry money. Marry money.' And I despised that advice, and now I was trying to make Robert do just exactly that very same thing. Well, it was quite certain that this proud, independent person would never become a dependent on his wife. Fortunately, I had one more card up my sleeve.

'You are perhaps right,' I said, with assumed thoughtfulness. 'You could never become that unhappy creature, the man who lives upon his wife's money. You have got some hundreds a year, however.'

'And she has, how many thousands a year? My whole income would not pay my share of the servants.'

'Then, again, a man and wife are not obliged to have equal fortunes. If one is a little richer than the other'—

'A little! Oh, he says a little!'

'Go on. You will give me a chance presently.'

'Let her give away all but three hundred pounds a year. Then we should start on equal terms.'

'No, because you would have still before you your ambition with its solid side, and she would have nothing left. In ten years' time you might be drawing five thousand pounds a year official salary, and she have nothing more than her three hundred. No, Robert, the equitable way would be to reckon your future prospects and your future position as an asset worth ten thousand pounds a year, or anything you please a year.'

Robert shook his head. 'An asset is something that can be realised. No one would advance a farthing on the security of my prospects. As a business man, George, you really ought to know by this time what an asset means.'

'You are not going to a pawnbroker or a bank. You have an asset, I say, that in a certain lady's eyes might outweigh all her own advantages.'

'All the same, George,' he replied doggedly, 'I shall not stoop to live upon my wife.'

'You are nothing but a perverse, obstinate, and pig-headed bourgeois. You had better go back to Wapping. Come, then, I will meet you

on your own ground. You admit that a few thousands, more or less, matter nothing.'

'I'm sure I don't know. All I do know is that I've got about three hundred pounds a year, and that Lady Frances has got twenty thousand pounds a year, and that the thing is impossible on that ground alone.'

'It isn't impossible on that ground—if you could rise to the situation. You have done very well, Robert, so far, but you ought to throw off the last vestige of the shop.'

'What the devil has the shop got to do with Lady Frances and her money?'

'Why, you are not going into partnership. Her money would be simply a means of keeping you in a set of people and style of life necessary for your ambitions. It is a detail. You feel that you belong to that kind of life: you don't want to use her money for gambling, or for horse-racing, or anything at all: this roof, which would perhaps be hers, and the food and the wine and the rest of it would be nothing—nothing at all—in comparison with the solid advantages of society and influence. You ought to rise above such considerations, really. I am ashamed that you are tied down by such unworthy considerations. They belong to Wapping-in-the-Ouse, believe me, not to Piccadilly.'

He laughed and shook his head. 'I cannot live upon my wife,' he said doggedly. 'Wapping or Piccadilly—I care not where I live—so that it is not upon my wife.'

'Well—then?—'

'Say no more about it, George. She is as far from me now as if I were at Wapping. I am sorry I told you. Yet I don't know. It's a relief to tell somebody, and you are the only man to whom I ever told anything. Meantime—there's an end. She doesn't suspect, at any rate.'

I was for the moment diplomatically doubtful. I might tell him at once of the wonderful find that would clear away one obstacle at least. But then, I knew so well, beforehand, the lofty scorn with which Frances would sweep away such an obstacle; how she would make him understand the paltry nature of her own wealth compared with the riches and abundance of his own abilities; how she would make him ashamed of his own weakness in not perceiving this fact for himself, and how he would become converted and resigned and submissive—this strong proud man. Knowing all this, I would not tell him—yet.

'There are,' I summed up, 'three obstacles in the way. There is Isabel—very good—you shall be released. Oh! I am not guessing. I tell you plainly that she does not care for you, except as a generous benefactor. You can't marry a girl who is only grateful. You have never made love to her.'

'Of course not—I had no time.'

'And you cannot expect her to be in love with you. Moreover, my dear cousin, I have reason to believe that if she were free to-day, she would be engaged to-morrow.'

'Oh! To some little clerk in the docks, I suppose. Isabel has no greater ambition than that.'

'Perhaps.' He had no suspicion at all—yet he knew that I had been wandering about with

this girl all the summer evenings. 'Girls,' I said, 'are sometimes singularly free from ambition. Some of them want nothing but love and a tranquil home; they are easily contented.'

'I suppose that is so,' he said with pity. 'And so Isabel really wants to be released. Why could she not tell me so herself?'

'Why; because she has always been afraid of you. And grateful. She would never take such a step unless she knew that you wished it. I shall fill her heart with happiness to-night when I tell her what you really want.'

'Then let her be happy—with her dock clerk!' His face cleared immediately, and he laughed. 'Poor child!' he said. 'She was a good clerk and a good accountant. How should her mind soar any higher?'

'As for the other obstacle, Robert, that objection to the lady on the score of wealth: it is unworthy of you: it is also unpractical. You ought to be quite above such considerations.'

'All the same, George,' he repeated, 'to live upon my wife would choke me.'

'You shall not be choked, my dear Robert. This obstacle, too, shall be removed. Trust me—believe me—when I tell you—on my word of honour—that it shall be removed.'

I had, I say, the greatest confidence in Lady Frances and in the arguments which I knew she would employ to break down this heart of stone: but there was also the additional comfort of feeling that the bag of precious stones was in that seaman's chest. How beautiful is the working out of the Doctrine of Chances! When one takes up a hand at cards there are millions to one against the particular hand that turns up. Yet it does turn up—that hand always turns up—in the face of those overwhelming odds. So with that bag of diamonds. Everybody in the Wapping branch of the Burnikel family had examined that chest; turned it upside down: taken everything out: yet had never found that hiding-place. If it had been found at any time it would have changed the fortune and altered the future of the whole family. Robert would have been impossible. Had Robert been born, brought up and trained otherwise, he would have been quite another Robert. He would have understood, for instance, which he has never yet perfectly succeeded in understanding, the audacity of his ambition, and, as it would seem to those who know the world—but not to himself—its impossibility. Why do young men of obscure birth and poverty succeed so often and so greatly? Because they do not understand the audacity of their own ambition. 'I will win scholarships: I will go to Cambridge: I will be Senior Wrangler: I will be Master of my College: I will be Vice-chancellor of the University,' says the lad of parts—low down in the world. The lad of parts higher up understands that the very flower of the English-speaking youth are his rivals: that he must beat the best: that he must actually be the best: and he is discouraged for climbing. For nerve, and hand, and eye, the poor boy has a far better chance than the rich. All our boys before they are born ought to pray for poverty—with brains and courage.

All these fine reflections passed through my

head between my last speech and Robert's reply. He held out his hand. 'Trust you, George?' he said. 'Isn't it rather late in the day to ask that question? But how? How can that obstacle be removed?'

'I shall not tell you. Now go on without any misgiving; and conquer—if you can. Only, Robert, pray remember. This is not quite the same thing as the other venture, you know. Then you had to do with a school-girl, a child. Now you have an equal. You cannot understand. You must stoop to woo—even you—oh! Samson.'

'Only an equal? An equal? Don't speak like a fool, George. You who know her?'

'You think that way at last. You have found some one to whom you are not equal. So much the better. But—I say, how about the foolishness of fondling and kisses?'

'Oh!' There rose upon his cheek the roseate hues of early dawn—yet he was six-and-twenty. 'Of course this is different—quite different. Isabel was only a school-girl, as you say. That kind of thing would only unsettle her at that age. This is quite different.'

CHAPTER XXIII.

I found my mistress—it was nearly nine o'clock in the evening—in the parlour, playing her thoughts to herself. The room had no light except that of the street lamp, which showed her in her light gray dress, something like a ghost. She turned her head as I opened the door. In the lamplight I saw her sweet, serious face, and her limpid eyes. I was dragged by ropes to fall at her feet. But I refrained. There was something to be said first.

'George,' she said, 'you are worried about something. What has happened?'

There must have been something in my eyes—yet the room was so dark. Perhaps she could feel in some magnetic way—the way of love—the presence of emotion. This kind of thought-reading is a branch of the science which has been too much neglected. It is, unfortunately, incapable of being put upon any stage, or even illustrated in any drawing-room. Which is, of course, the reason of this neglect.

'Isabel,' I said, 'you are a witch. Come into the study, and I will tell you why I am moved.'

The study was also in twilight, the light of the same lamp in the street falling upon the polished wainscot, and reflected about the room. My hand touched Isabel's, and again that temptation fell upon me to take the girl in my arms and to kiss her, and never to be weary of that kissing.

'You promised, George,' she said, reading my mind a second time. 'Not yet—not yet.'

'I promised, Isabel, only until there was no longer need to keep that promise.'

'There is still the need, and greater need than ever. Quiet yourself, George—I can hear your heart beating. Tell me, or let me go.'

I lit the candles. 'I am quiet, Isabel.'

'Now tell me what has happened.'

'That need, Isabel, exists no longer.'

'Exists no longer? Is Robert dead?'

'No, he is living still, but that need exists no longer.'

'What has happened then?'

'Sit down, Isabel. Take a pen and paper. So now, write at my dictation. It is the only act of obedience that I shall ever ask of you. All the future I shall be your slave. This evening alone I ask you to obey me.'

She hesitated. Then she sat down.

'Write: "My dear Robert."'

'I am to write to Robert?'

'You shall hear if you will be obedient for this one and only occasion. "My dear Robert"—have you got that?'

'It looks very odd on paper. This is the first letter I have ever written to him.'

'Write: "I learn that you yourself are anxious that our engagement should be broken off." Have you got that?'

'But, George, anxious. Robert anxious? What does this mean?'

'Finish the letter. "To me it has always been a meaningless engagement, and really impossible. When you made that promise to me, I was only a school-girl, and I was frightened. My only comfort was in thinking that it was to be a long engagement. I release you from your promise very willingly. You made a mistake, and you have been too proud to acknowledge it, though I have never ceased from the beginning to understand that it was a mistake.—Yours." What will you be—yours sincerely? That will do. "Isabel." Have you written it?'

'Yes, I have written it. But I do not understand it. Does he really and truly desire his release? Why?'

'He does, really and truly. But he will never ask you himself. The release must come from you.'

'You have not told me why. Is Robert going to be engaged to some one else?'

'Perhaps. You are not jealous. But of course not. How could you be jealous? I think it is very likely that he will be engaged before long.'

'No,' she smiled. 'I have no right to be jealous. He never loved me. I never cared enough about him to be jealous. His engagement was just a part of his kindness. It gave him the right to maintain us without the appearance of almsgiving. No, George, I am not jealous.'

'At present he could not afford to marry, unless it was some woman with money. He understands, however, that he has no right to bind you any longer to a loveless engagement. He says he has had no time to make love. If he marries it should be to some woman of political influence, and with political friends, who would advance him.'

'He never thinks of anything at all but his own advancement. I wonder if he has a heart somewhere hidden away.'

'He has plenty of heart, Isabel, if you can get at it. The misfortune in your case was that while he was here the business of his own advancement did occupy all his soul and all his strength, and all his mind and all his heart. The ground is cleared now, and he has begun his march. The rest is easy, and now is the

time for the flowers of passion to show themselves and to expand. We look to see strange things before long.' With such shallow humbug did I attempt to veil the truth. But in vain. Women's minds are swift and far-shooting.

'There must be another woman,' she said thoughtfully, and not in the least jealously. 'Otherwise, he would not have considered the question of his engagement at all. Why should he? I am hidden away down here: he was not going to marry me for years—any number of years. He never writes to me; he takes no notice of me; his engagement did not make the least difference to him. Yet he suddenly expresses his wish to be released. Well, George, he shall be released. About that other woman you will tell me what you please.'

Therefore, I told her all.

'Robert in love!' she laughed gently. 'I cannot understand it. Will he tell her, as he told me, that there is to be no foolishness of fondling?'

'I don't think he will, Isabel?'

She heaved a deep sigh. 'I have worked for him,' she said, 'for five long years—you will never understand how long those years have been. He is a hard master; he expects the best work always; no one must be tired, or sick, or weak, who works for him.'

'A hard master indeed.'

'And never a word of praise or approbation. Oh George, I have longed for a word of kindness. It was dreadful to be engaged to a man who was only a master all the time. Never a word of kindness would he give me.'

'He was absorbed, Isabel; he thought of nothing but the work—never anything of the people who helped in the work.'

'What was the work? What did he intend? He never told me. I was like a man blind-folded, dragging a heavy cart along a road that led whither he knew not. Well, he wants his release; he shall have it,' she repeated.

'Since he wants that, Isabel, forgive him all the rest.'

'I have forgiven him, George. I have forgiven him since you came—and—and—and since my heart was softened.' The tears rose to her eyes.

'Isabel!'

'Are you sure, George, that he desires his release?'

'Quite sure. Robert knows that I have come this evening with the intention of asking you for it.'

'Then I will write him a longer letter than this.' She tore up the little note that I had dictated, and wrote another and a much longer one. 'I shall not suffer my loveless lover, my patient bridegroom, to depart without a little explanation. I am glad—oh! so glad to be released. But still, no one likes to be told to go without a little understanding of things.'

It was certainly a much finer letter than mine. But then, you see, I was thinking of nothing but the release, and Isabel was thinking of what the man had done for her.

'Dear Robert,' she wrote, 'George tells me that the time has come when you desire the termination of our engagement, entered upon by you out of pity. You wanted an excuse

for maintaining two penniless people—one of them helpless, and the second too young and ignorant to be of much use. I understand now exactly why you forced this engagement upon yourself without any thought of love. That was five years ago. I was then seventeen, and am now two-and-twenty. During this long time I have looked in vain for any word of interest, any look of affection from you. It has been quite plain to me, all along, that you had no kind of love for me. I could not tell you this; partly because we owe you so much that we must always do whatever you desire: partly because it is hard for a woman to say such things: and partly because I was afraid. That you should release me, therefore, is a great relief to me. It must be unhappiness enough for a woman to marry a man whom she does not love: it must be far worse if that man does not even profess to love her.

'You are quite free, Robert. You have lifted a great weight from my heart. You will be far happier yourself without the fetters of an engagement which had proved impossible. You must marry a woman who will help you in your ambitions. This I could never do; and when you become a great and famous man you will be pleased to remember that you released one who would feel no pride in your success, and could take no part in your ambition. And so I am always, and just as much as ever, your grateful and obedient servant, clerk, and housekeeper, but never your bride,

ISABEL'

I took the letter and placed it in an envelope. It was done. Robert had got his release, and Isabel was free.

'Oh! my love!' I cried, and held out my arms.

'Oh! No—George,' she shrank back. 'Not so soon. 'Oh! I am like a newly-made widow: but I am full of joy. Is it right? Oh! George—so soon!'

'Isabel! At last! At last!'

GRETCHEN AT HOME.

THE German girl has a halo of poetry and romance around her. Love has been made to her a thousand times in music. She is blue eyed. She is golden haired. If she be only a miller's daughter, she is, like Schubert's 'schöne Müllerin,' seen and instantly beloved with rapture, and the poet cries out that so exultant a passion shall be carved on every tree, and told to every brook: 'Thine is my heart—my heart is thine forever!'

O blissful poet—the same adorable maiden had been killing a fowl that very morning and plucking it! Of course there is no harm in that. If we are to have chickens for dinner, we cannot have them alive; somebody has to kill them. Still, one is troubled by a sense of incongruity; these occupations are not those of a sylph surrounded by poetry. One thinks of Charlotte cutting bread and butter, when she had seen the last of poor Werther. We are all

human, and the necessities of life make unromantic work behind the scenes. The great difference between girl life in Germany and in England lies in the doing of this domestic work. In Germany every girl has to take her share in it, from the young baroness (the daughter of the elder baroness, you know) down to the aforesaid miller's daughter—whom we were so shocked just now to find killing the fowl just at the moment when the poet was singing 'My heart is thine forever!'

Opinions differ as to what work is unfit for a sensitive nature, and a refined pair of hands. Nor do we all think alike as to the necessity or wisdom of kitchen occupation for the daughters of the house. One titled lady, the wife of a Scottish earl, has given her children a small cottage in the grounds to play with, which cottage is kept in apple-pie order with the greatest delight; her ladyship's little daughter keeping the fireplace polished, the boy kindling the fire, and both getting tea with milk from their own cow, when the elders are expected to call at this life-size dolls' house on a summer afternoon. But that is play. With Gretchen in the Vaterland it is otherwise. She sets to work with the system and thoroughness of her nation. She may be destined to be the life companion of an intellectual man, but what is most impressed upon her is that genius must have a dinner. The poetry which surrounded her blonde head as a halo vanishes on nearer approach, and the ideal side of life with it. What should we think of the fairy tale, if the Prince awoke the Sleeping Beauty, not with a kiss, but with a hesitating question as to whether she knew how to cook?

There can be no question of Gretchen's marriage unless she is already a good housewife. As soon as schoolroom days are over, her mother places her in another household—perhaps with the Baroness von Somebody-or-other, for a year, paying about a hundred pounds. Meanwhile, another girl, from somewhere else, comes to the first household, to replace the daughter and to cover the expense by learning housekeeping and paying a similar premium. At this point, of course, every one asks, Why does not Gretchen's mother teach her own daughter instead? It seems strange; but Gretchen is supposed to accept the routine of housework more willingly among strangers, and also it is hoped that she may learn new style, improvements on the old ways at home. During the year, the baroness has not only to teach Gretchen, but to bring her out in society. There are to be dances and dinner parties, and the pupil *débutante* is to help in preparing the house for the dance, or decorating the table for the dinner. Dinner is in the middle of the day; dances are seldom prolonged into the night; so the next morning our young friend has to forget at once her partners and all the pretty things they said, and to go out early to market to cheapen sausage and cabbage for sauerkraut. She will see also to the linen and the washing. If it be a house where there are no sheets, but only as we foreigners think, one feather-bed on top of

another, bed-making will not take very long, and will develop the maiden's round arms. Then she has to trot about in the three kitchens, to help with the cooking. One kitchen is for rough work; another contains the stove; the third, which our little friend likes best, is a bright and well-appointed pantry for making sweets and dainties.

If it be a country-house, the dinner is served in the hall—a primitive arrangement reminding one of the use of the larger baronial hall in the castle. The door from the garden opens into this panelled apartment, where the pavement is simply flagged, and a few family portraits look down from the walls. The principal woman-servant in many households takes her place at the table—perhaps a remnant from the times when all the retainers were seated beyond the salt-cellar.

The girl's chief recreations are her Kränzchen ('Little Garland') and her share in pleasure parties. The wreath or garland idea is one which our girls at home would enjoy. Gretchen and five friends of the same age meet once a week for tea and cake, and talk and sewing, at the house of each in turn. What is said in the wreath is said verily 'sub rosa.' If anything is repeated outside, the young gossip is turned out of the 'Wreath' forever, nor will any other little circle of six admit the expelled member who could not keep confidence. At every meeting the six friends give a copper coin each; and the money kept to the end of the year furnishes a day's pleasure for all together.

The financial side of these girl circles is essentially German. The same idea of practical economy is carried out in the country parties which take place in the summer. All the young folks club to pay their shares strictly afterwards, and then they sally forth to some riverside inn, surrounded perhaps by the woods, and within hearing of a waterfall. They have already dined. Instead of afternoon tea, they take lager-beer at little tables in the garden. Early in the evening the musician comes, and the big room with its rough boarded floor is given over to them for dancing. Dressing for a dance is no difficulty to the German girl. All her summer dresses have full sleeves only to the elbow, and the neck is cut slightly out in a square, back and front. So she has put on the pink, or white, or blue dress, which happens to be freshest, and is quite ready any time for an impromptu whirl, with a little thin beer instead of an ice for refreshment. For the last dance, the girls are expected to choose their partners; and it is still early when they all pay their share, both man and maid, in a practical and unromantic manner. And then they go home through the woods, perhaps singing part-songs about those very pine-forests which have inspired so much German poetry. The next morning, the round of marketing and cheapening, and cooking and eating, begins again, just as if nothing had happened. And one of those days, when Gretchen, with the consent of her parents, is engaged, it is not a quiet happiness, a secret whispered with private congratulations, and happy blushes. Cards are sent at once to all the friends and acquaintances making the great announcement, and the

betrothed pair are presented to everybody at a ceremonious reception. Gretchen is a good housekeeper, and Fritz has money. Let us congratulate them and offer flowers.

THE COLONEL'S PLAN.

II.

THE Colonel's attentions grew, and upon Mrs Kennedy their effect was marked. She became curiously gracious by fits and starts to her daughter-in-law, and the acid undercurrent slipped out of her talk. Rosebud was greatly puzzled, but rejected the suggestion that Archie proffered, with disdain. Her father—her dear, faithful soldier father could not have any such intention. It was not likely! So Archie held his peace.

'Come over to tea with me some afternoon,' said the Colonel once, and Mrs Kennedy, who took all his speeches to herself, responded:

'Charmed!'

He fetched them in the dogcart, and Mrs Kennedy got up as lightly as she was able, and fancying that only old ladies were supposed to dread accidents, would not show her terror, but sat smiling nervously, while the horse capered round and round. Rose held on behind and wondered.

It was a lovely day. They skimmed along with glimpses of moor and sea beyond the rowan-fringed high-road. Mrs Kennedy chattered happily, pointing out little bits of scenery to the Colonel, who, fully occupied, could only glance at them out of the corner of his eye, and mutter 'Beautiful!'

There were houses here and there, showing through trees dimly, as became country mansions. Mrs Kennedy did not omit to take note of these.

'Do you see Castle Whin?' she said. 'It is quite deserted now, since Sir James went abroad. He has been frequenting some foreign Bath place for his gout. I am sure it must be Monte Carlo, really—because he was always rakish. He was an old admirer of mine, by the way!'

She laughed, a little high-pitched laugh, and kissed her hand to the chimneys of Castle Whin. Then she looked behind graciously.

'My dear Rose, are you comfortable?'

They turned in at the gate, and the Colonel made a pretty speech. Mrs Kennedy skipped up the steps, expressing her curiosity to see the wonderful trophies of his adventures.

'I shall be delighted, if it will not bore you,' said the Colonel courteously.

Rosebud rolled up her gloves, and ran out into the garden to fill her hands with flowers from the dear old untidy home. She could hear the Colonel throw up the windows to let Mrs Kennedy see the view, and she could hear her mother-in-law making exclamations in a young, affected voice. But the flowers, the familiar flowers were smiling up, and Rosebud forgot everything else, bending eagerly over the borders.

The Colonel was taking Mrs Kennedy all over

the house, sparing her no tiger story, no pig-sticking tale. There was only one door that he did not unlock, walking past it hastily.

'And this?' inquired the visitor in passing; but he did not seem to hear.

Lastly, he invited her to behold his study, and the treasures it contained.

'What a delightful room!' said Mrs Kennedy, sinking deep into a shabby old leather chair. She was slightly fatigued by her royal progress from room to room, although she did not show it, as her colour was not able to come and go.

The Colonel looked wistfully round his den.

'A few little touches would make it charming,' went on Mrs Kennedy. 'At present it gives too much of a brown effect. A lighter paper—and art serge drapery—and a few frilled cushions, would make it lovely. And then these old swords want polishing.'

'Whom have I to do that for me?' said the Colonel suddenly, leaning against the oak mantelpiece, grizzled and brown himself. 'I am only a solitary old soldier, as rusty as my swords, and who would take pity on me in the kind way you suggest? I have nobody to—ah—to frill my cushions.'

Rosebud's mother-in-law sighed gingerly, and said nothing. The blush was fixed in her cheek.

The tea-table was brought in. Rose waited, making her flowers into bunches, and rubbing the roses against her cheek. The other two were long. Perhaps the Colonel was wearying out her mother-in-law with his old Indian stories—and then Mrs Kennedy would be tired and cross, and she would suffer. Oh, if only she and Archie could have a home to themselves! no house could be big enough for them, as she had discovered. It was of no use bothering Archie; poor Archie, who could not help it, and who must not know that his little wife was unhappy, that she could hardly bear the tyranny of his own mother. . . . She was not sorry—oh no, she dared not imagine she regretted having persuaded the Colonel not to make them wait. He had said that it would be better for them to marry when Archie's success had made his position as good as his birth: he had looked higher for his little Rose. But she had been wilful and had got her way, and—oh, she was not, would not be sorry. But it was very hard. . . .

Her mother-in-law came in, followed by the Colonel, who shut the door.

'I have some news for you, Rose,' said he, standing awkwardly in front of his daughter. 'Mrs Kennedy has done me the honour to promise to be my wife.'

'Oh, Papa!'

Rose had succeeded in getting one minute alone with her father, and out came the reproach that had until then been only in her eyes.

'Aren't you glad, little one?' said the Colonel.

'Glad?' repeated Rose, with a gasp. She had not thought of herself—she could not stop to consider her own affairs. Only she thought of a white stone cross with 'Until the day break' written on it—and of the one closed room up-stairs, full of untouched memories. When the

day did break, how would it be, after this—desecration?

'Oh, Papa, Papa, how could you!' she cried, trying vainly to recover from the shock. The Colonel winced. He could not say to her: 'It was the only way I could think of to rescue my little girl from being bullied. And the dead will know why I do it.' But he laid his hands on her shoulders, remarking stoutly:

'So you don't approve, Rosebud? Ah, but you must remember that I have no little girl to look after me now. Think it over, think it over as we drive back. A stepmother can't be as bad as—well, well, give me a kiss and be quiet!'

'I am ready, good people,' interrupted Mrs Kennedy, tripping briskly in. 'Run and put on your things, my dear, and let us make haste. We have news for Archie, haven't we? He will be so astonished!'

'What has come over the Colonel?'

'Heaven knows. Or perhaps the other place has had more to do with it. He looks very queer.'

'Some old bullet making itself unpleasant.'

'More likely to be a new bullet, between ourselves. He looks as if he would be happy to put an end to himself. May mean to do it with a halter.'

'What do you mean?'

'Why, he is always hooked on to old Mrs Kennedy. Never comes to the Club now. But if you look over there you'll see him three days a week, sitting in the middle of smoke and varnish, while the old lady frisks about with a tea-kettle.'

The men grunted. They were smoking in the veranda of the Golf Club, a solid stone building with a tower; and they looked across the links to an imitative structure that the Ladies' Club had erected on a hillock. Ladies were not allowed in the Club, and to avenge that lack of privilege they had made a law that no man should enter their domain. When they had parties, they handed teacups out of the windows. But gradually the severity of the laws were lessened, and fathers, brothers, and other people's brothers, were taken into the pavilion, and given tea in the small, varnished room, with its rows of lockers, and its smoking stove-pipe.

Of late, the Colonel—the Colonel who used to sit and smoke with his cronies in the Club after his round on the long course—had been observed with horror pottering round the ladies' links with Mrs Kennedy, and stooping his head under the pavilion lintel. His old friends began to fancy that he was mad. . . .

It was on one fine afternoon, when the sea and the sky were blue, and the golf links were a vision of green delight, that six veterans sat in the Club veranda and judged the Colonel.

'It's all up with him,' said one, pointing grimly with his pipe to two objects on a far hillock. One was the Colonel, leaning heavily on his putter—and the other, skittishly clad in scarlet, was Mrs Kennedy. 'All up with him. An old soldier should be able to run away. However, he has gone down. He is going to marry her.'

The other five started out of their chairs. 'Absurd!'

'True'—and there was a universal groan, in the middle of which a new-comer pushed open the glass doors, and came out on to the veranda.

'What are you plotting, hey?' said he. They made room sadly.

'You have come home to behold strange signs and portents, Sir James,' said the teller of the news. 'Your old flame—Mrs Kennedy—is going to get married.'

'What? Annie Kennedy? She must be an old woman,' remarked Sir James, settling himself in their midst. He was a rakish old baronet, with a twinkling eye and a love of gossip. The smokers drew together, and told the news, going on to other stories and the doings of ten good years. . . .

'I shall go and call upon Mrs Kennedy,' said Sir James, with a chuckle. . . .

III.

Mrs Kennedy sat in state in the peacock drawing-room. She had had many callers lately.

Rose was a meek accessory to these receptions; she shook hands and sang when she was requested, and then subsided, or managed to slip away to watch for glimpses of Archie across the street. Mrs Kennedy did not require her presence.

The bride-elect was in all her glory when Sir James came to call. A party of lady friends had just departed, evidently struck by the youthfulness of their hostess. She had grown—or made herself—twenty years younger. The knowledge that they saw it brought a gleam of triumph to her eye as she stepped forward to greet her old admirer.

'You are quite a stranger in Scotland, Sir James,' she said.

'Who drove me away?' said he, dropping into the manner of a great many years ago.

Mrs Kennedy laughed airily. She was looking her best, with a bright dab of pink upon either cheek. 'The gout, I was told,' said she.

Sir James edged his chair a little nearer and chuckled. She was a fine woman, and had worn wonderfully. 'So you are to be congratulated, hey?' he said. 'I didn't know you were in the market. 'Pon my honour, it is too bad!'

Mrs Kennedy's eyes were lit up with a sudden gleam.

The Colonel was marching up the street to call upon his bride. He looked up as he crossed the road. Mrs Kennedy was in the habit of stationing herself at the window when he was late, and of tapping archly upon the pane. To-day he could not distinguish anything, for the afternoon sun was shining upon the glass. He walked down the entry and rang the bell. Then he was taken up.

Mrs Kennedy received him in the dressing-room. She greeted him with an embarrassed laugh that was strangely like a girlish giggle.

'I am so distressed!' she said.

'Anything the matter with Rose?' said the Colonel quickly.

'Oh dear, no. This concerns you more—personally,' said Mrs Kennedy, hesitating.

Personally? The Colonel could not help staring. 'The fact is,' she continued, 'I must throw myself on your generosity, and beg of you to release me.'

'My dear lady,' began the Colonel anxiously. Was his only plan to be scattered to the winds? He had gone through so much already.

'Pray forgive me,' said Mrs Kennedy, with her handkerchief to her eyes; 'I cannot tell you how culpable, and vexed, and sorry for you I feel. But, Colonel, first love is unconquerable!—And Sir James Dalrymple of Castle Whin has—has been to see me. We were attached to each other long ago, but he was not, presumptively, Sir James then—and there were obstacles. So I eventually married poor Mr Kennedy. . . . But the lapse of years is a trifle—a mere trifle; and when I discovered that his feelings are still the same, I could not help letting him see the state of my own. With his position in the county, and his gout, and the great, desolate house of Castle Whin, he requires a helpmate. You will be angry with me, Colonel, but I could not resist his appeal. I feel for you most sincerely, and I trust that you will find some other who will be to you all that I might have been.'

The Colonel bowed solemnly over her hand and took his leave. He found it very difficult to express himself, and his only resource was flight. But on the landing his feelings got the better of him, and he could not help indulging in an impromptu war-dance, eloquent of joy.

Rosebud happened to look over the stair. Her voice rang down anxiously from above:

'Papa, what is the matter?—oh, Papa!'

'Cramp, my dear, cramp,' said the Colonel hastily.

CONCLUSION.

MAHWO.

By F. HARVEY MAJOR.

I LOVED him from the moment when my astonished gaze first rested upon his form. Do not think, I beg, that I am some sentimental, love-sick maiden about to bore you with the nabby-pamby details of an *affaire du cœur*. I am an old weather-stained West African trader with a parchment-like epidermis, an abnormally developed liver, which keeps me well posted up as to how the wind blows, so to speak, but still possessing a warm corner in the region of my heart for anything absolutely unique in the shape of mortality, and Mahwo decidedly filled the bill.

I was a passenger on board the R.M.S. *Cameroon*, on a voyage from Liverpool to Old Calabar, and as was customary, we called at Grand Sestros, on the Liberian coast, for Kroomen.

Kroomen, or 'boys' as we invariably call them, are the tribes inhabiting the district around Monrovia, and are employed by the white traders as labourers, in the oil rivers and elsewhere. They engage for a term of twelve months, and for this term they are given as remuneration goods to the value of about three

pounds each, in addition to their keep and passage out and home again. They are a strong and intelligent race, very similar in character to coolies; and since slavery has been abolished, trade could scarcely be carried on without their assistance.

As the anchor was let go, the krooboy came out in hundreds in their little canoes to meet us. They crowded on board, seeking engagements, and looking about for any unconsidered trifles sufficiently light and portable to be quietly dropped overboard to their friends, for thieving is an inborn trait in a krooboy's character.

It was whilst watching the animated scene on deck from the break of the poop that I first saw Mahwo. I dropped my handkerchief, and was stooping to pick it up, when he, rushing out from a group of boys, anticipated me, and as he returned it, tried to speak some words; but being afflicted in a terrible degree with the defect of stammering, was unable to make me understand him. Even had his elocutionary ability been of the highest, I should not have heeded it; my mind being solely occupied in considering the extraordinary physical eccentricities of the figure before me.

There was no mistake about it. From the Mediterranean to the Cape of Good Hope, and from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean, he was, without doubt, the ugliest negro as yet discovered in the vast continent of Africa.

And now to describe him! It is a difficult matter, and I fear I cannot do justice to it.

He was probably sixteen years of age; tall, with a hump growing on one shoulder; tattooed from his scalp, which was clean-shaved, to the soles of his feet; and horribly pock-marked. He squinted in a truly diabolical manner, not in the ordinary way, but each eye having an individual twist peculiar to itself; possessed two odd legs, varying by about an inch in length and consequently causing a grotesque limp; bore upon his face and body half-a-dozen or more jagged scars, honourable mementoes of warfare; and to crown all, his upper lip was split open to his nose like a bulldog's, and his teeth were filed down to points, so that when he endeavoured to smile, the effect produced was such as to involuntarily remind one of Victor Hugo's unfortunate hero, *'l'homme qui rit.'*

When I recovered from the surprise his presence occasioned, I asked his name, which, after some atrocious attempts, he gave me to understand was Mahwo; and I engaged him on the spot.

By the time we reached Old Calabar he had displayed such qualities and zeal that I appointed him to act as my valet and general factotum. I told him to count my clothes before giving them out to the washerman, and again upon their return, to make sure that nothing was lost; and the next day, seeing a lot of curious chalk marks on the side of my room, I inquired their meaning, when he replied, in his stuttering style, which, however, I now thoroughly understood, 'He be tally for clothes side, sah,' meaning an account of all the clothes delivered.

The marks seemed so incongruous that I wanted further enlightenment, and learned that he stretched out to its extreme length each article, making a chalk mark corresponding at each end on the wall. I asked how he would know the things on their return, and he said he should 'pull them out to the marks again.' I laughed at this, and pointed out that he would not know to which article each two marks referred, but he explained that he had cut nicks the same length as the chalk marks in the clothes. I kept my own account after this.

He was, of course, an inveterate thief, but although he helped himself with the most unblushing effrontery to my belongings, and told the most startling lies to screen himself, he took, so far as I could judge, particularly great care to let no one else steal from me.

I remember he one evening took his place behind my chair at dinner wearing over his loin cloth one of my silk singlets upon which I had that morning stamped my name in marking-ink. I called his attention to the fact, when he at once explained that he had feared I should suspect him as he had unfortunately splashed some ink when clearing the table, and it had made a mark on his singlet like that which I put on my clothes. This excuse was unanswerable, so I said no more.

His propensity for 'acquiring' things proved, however, of genuine advantage to me. I used to take him everywhere I went, and soon noticed that upon the morning after spending an evening on board a mail-steamer, my breakfast-table was supplied with fowls a few sizes larger than usual. I had not troubled as to the *raison d'être*, until one morning a Captain Sullivan of the s.s. *Loanda*, whose hospitality I had partaken of the night before, came to breakfast with me, and, to my astonishment, when the covers were lifted, I found a fat roast goose before me. I turned to Mahwo and asked where it came from, whilst Sullivan tried the temper of his knife. Mahwo said it was one of a lot of fowls I had bought from a native that morning. This, of course, I knew to be a lie; and Sullivan jocularly remarked, 'You've not been raiding the poultry pens aboard my ship, have you, Mahwo?'

Mahwo grinned, and my eyes were at once opened to a hitherto unsuspected 'virtue' in the treasure I possessed. When Sullivan had taken his departure, I taxed Mahwo with the theft; and he, seeing that I was more amused than annoyed (for Sullivan had a reputation for 'annexing' parrots, and besides, I had lived some years on the coast myself, and I fancy the heat tends to warp a man's honesty somewhat when eatables only are concerned), admitted that he generally picked up a few fowls when we visited a steamship at night, because he knew I liked fat ones. I looked at him reprovingly, saying that such conduct was not honest; but he silenced me by saying, 'Oh yes, it was, for he paid himself for them out of my tobacco-box!'

After this I made a point of easing what little conscience I suffered from by inviting the captain, doctor, and purser of any ship where I might spend an evening, to come and

breakfast with me the next morning, promising to give them something special, a promise which I seldom failed to keep, thanks to my henchman.

The mention of parrots reminds me that some friends in England had been pressing me to send a few home; and as birds were somewhat scarce in Old Calabar at the time, I wrote to a friend in Benin asking him to send a few dozens round to me by the *Forcados*, a little river-steamer.

In response he shipped about thirty, advising me at the same time by letter.

When the *Forcados* arrived I went on board, and after reading my letter asked Tom Diaper, the captain, for the birds.

'Very sorry, old man,' he replied; 'but they've gone the way of all flesh and feathers. Dead—every one.'

Seeing some scores in cages under the bridge, I asked to whom they belonged. 'Oh,' said Tom, 'those are my birds.'

'Well, yours seem healthy enough; it's a singular thing that all mine should die,' I remarked.

'Ah, quite so,' replied Tom, and then added impressively, 'but mine never do die—they know me too well—they *daren't*.'

I saw it was no use arguing about them, for there is no morality in the matter of parrots on the coast, so I dropped the subject, but invited myself to dinner that evening; taking Mahwo with me after casually telling him of my loss. When we left the *Forcados* about midnight my gig resembled a Maltese bumboat. Mahwo had managed to 'appropriate' thirty-three parrots, a sack of potatoes, about two dozen ducks and fowls, and a young pig; to say nothing of eight or ten assorted bottles of sauces.

I gave a big dinner the next night, and had roast pork at the head of the table. I smiled significantly upon Tom, remarking that 'I hoped he would find it to his taste, as I had had it sent to me from Benin,' as I sent Mahwo with a plateful to him. Like the sailor's parrot he thought a good deal if he did didn't talk much.

At the end of my 'venture' I brought Mahwo to England, but did not keep him more than a few weeks as he suffered so severely from cold. I handed him over to a purser of my acquaintance to take back to his home in Grand Sestros; and some months afterwards, when again at my business on the coast, this time at Bonny, I was one evening on board a mail-steamer that had arrived during the day, when the doctor, addressing me, said, 'Oh, by the way, we've got a friend of yours on board.'

'Indeed,' I replied, 'who's that?'

'Mahwo,' he answered, and passed the word for him. He was very pleased to see me, and said he should like to stay, but had arranged to go south with the ship and back again to the Kroo country.

I remained on board rather late, it being one or two o'clock in the morning when I entered my gig, and throwing myself down amongst the rugs in the stern-sheets, gave the order to 'shove off,' and 'give way.'

I was barely clear of the ship, when I felt something rubbing against my legs, and reaching my hand down found a rice bag full of live poultry. Mahwo was in the bows of the boat keeping a live sheep quiet. The next morning I had English mutton for breakfast, a great improvement on goat's flesh, and Mahwo was again at my elbow.

THE NEW AND THE OLD.

Oh maiden of ancient romances,
So modest and stately and fair,
Knowing nought of the power of your glances,
Of your loveliness all unaware,
And full of fine words like a poet,
Of tears as of water the sea,
Of love (but you don't seem to know it)
And innocent glee;

I seek you in Smith's and in Mudie's,
But ever I seek you in vain;
Though many a heroine wood is
And won, it is not in your strain.
And a novelette now is your medium,
Replacing the folio of yore,
Your sentiment's voted a tedium,
Your virtue a bore.

Clarissa, Pamela, resplendent
In virtue, and all of your kin,
Do you blush for your modern descendant,
For Dodo, the Aster, the Twin?
Do you ask of what *genus* this maid is,
(Whether maiden or man do you know?)
In that ultimate region of Hades,
Where dead heroines go.

Yet were you so hemmed and so girt in,
Oh maid of the past, as we think?
Had *you* never the pleasure of flirting?
Did that maidenly eye never wink?
Were your feelings forever the Stoics
They seem: did you always preserve
Your fine words, or when tired of heroics,
To slang did you swerve?

We hear *you* were never exponent
Of theories, a novelist's X,
Your sweet lips were never resonant
With views on law, marriage, and sex.
You were dainty as china of Dresden,
You were pedestalled far from all vice,
Oh maiden, immured and compressed in
A strait Paradise.

At times when the fair but pedantic
New woman proves rather a bore,
More logical she than romantic,
Too prosy by far to adore—
We sigh for that heroine less clever,
That light o'er old folios cast,
Though we know you have left us forever,
Oh maid of the past.

W. H.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 652.—VOL. XIII.

SATURDAY, JUNE 27, 1896.

PRICE 1½d.

THE DEFENCE OF THE ALAMO.

By J. L. HORNIBROOK.

IN the history of almost every nation, there are notable instances of heroism and self-sacrifice on the part of those who have risen in defence of their country in the hour of her greatest need. These men, generally drawn from all grades of life, have no claim to be regarded as other than volunteers, pure and simple. They fought from no mercenary motive, nor even for the sake of renown, but from that stern sense of duty which alone can make men heroes in the truest meaning of the word.

Too often these gallant deeds are accorded no suitable recognition. The graves where the heroes lie are sometimes neglected; their memory is not cherished as it ought to be, and even the anniversary of their glorious exploit calls forth no grateful tribute from their fellow-countrymen. And yet if they had not stood, as it were, in the breach, disaster and conquest would inevitably have followed.

Perhaps in no other instance is this more strikingly exemplified than in the case of the brave defenders of the Alamo fort during the Mexican invasion of Texas, in the earlier part of the present century. Never, in the whole of American history, has there been a more glorious achievement, and but rarely one attended with greater results. Yet, what is known of it now? How often is the incident referred to? Few even can tell the name of the indomitable commander, William Barrett Travis.

The story is well worth telling, for it affords another illustration—and a very striking one—of what a mere handful of resolute men can do, even when pitted against overwhelming odds. For us at home it ought to have a special interest, not only on account of the admiration such deeds evoke, no matter by whom they are performed, but from the fact that two, at least, of the immortal leaders of the defence originally hailed from this side of the Atlantic.

Early in the year 1836, a force of two thousand Mexicans, under the fierce and brutal Santa Anna, raided Texas. Houston, the Texan leader, who made a brave stand against the invaders with his gallant little band, was overwhelmed by numbers, and driven back into the interior, losing most of his followers.

Meanwhile, the Mexicans had been reinforced, a fresh body of troops having crossed the frontier, so that Santa Anna could count upon five thousand strong. With this force, composed of men as fierce and lawless as himself, he advanced with all the confidence of a conqueror, pillaging as he went, and carrying destruction into the very heart of the country. He announced his intention of sweeping Texas from end to end.

In this critical state of affairs it became a matter of vital importance to hold the Mexican marauders in check, until Houston had time to rally his scattered followers, and take the field with an adequate force. But how was this to be done? There was no regular organised force available, and to collect a sufficiently strong body of settlers, separated as they were by immense distances, involved a delay which would undoubtedly prove fatal. If Texas was to be saved, prompt and decisive measures must be taken.

It was then that the heroic Travis came to the front with his hundred and forty gallant volunteers. Incredible as it may seem, this devoted little band undertook the almost hopeless task of stemming the Mexican advance. They took possession of the Alamo fort, determined to hold out to the last, even though it ended in their total extermination.

Their example seemed to be contagious. One morning, as they looked out across the plain, they beheld a small body of men advancing towards the fort. The strangers proved to be thirty-two brave fellows from El Refugio, who had come to swell the little garrison. The only other reinforcements that arrived consisted of the renowned David Crockett and two of his

companions. The total strength of the garrison amounted to only one hundred and seventy-five, and against them five thousand Mexicans were advancing!

Still, in spite of these enormous odds, not a man flinched from the deadly struggle that was about to commence. They knew their country's fate was in their hands. With such leaders as Travis, Crockett, and Bowie (of 'bowie-knife' fame), the force shut up in that grimy little fort, small as their numbers were, was one not to be despised.

On the 23d of February the Mexican troops appeared in sight, and halted within range of the fort. The impetuous Santa Anna, confident of his ability to carry the place by storm, lost no time in making the attempt. But he had reckoned without his host; he was promptly repulsed with considerable loss, and deemed it expedient to get out of range of the deadly fire of those Texan riflemen.

Then the struggle commenced in downright earnestness—a struggle perhaps unparalleled in the history of warfare. Five Mexican batteries were placed in position, and began to play upon the doomed fort; but the defenders knew how to handle their rifles, and picked off the gunners with unerring skill. Santa Anna, mad with rage at being baffled by such an inferior force, made more than one desperate assault, but was driven back again and again.

With dogged obstinacy he stuck to the siege, determined to reduce the place at all hazards, and vowing vengeance on the defenders. Day after day the attack was renewed, but still the garrison showed no signs of surrender. Hemmed in on all sides by their fierce assailants, the besieged fought on with unflinching courage. In less than a week their deadly fire had brought down more than one thousand of the enemy. The ground around the fort was literally covered with the slain.

For twelve days the fight went on without interruption, and by the end of that time fully one-third of the whole Mexican force had been killed off. But the brave defenders had not escaped scot-free—far from it. Their ranks were wofully thinned; many were already wounded, and to add to their sufferings, sickness and hunger began to prey upon them.

On the morning of the 6th of March, it was evident that the Mexicans meditated a combined attack upon the fort. Santa Anna had resolved to hurl the whole of his remaining force against it, and carry it by sheer strength of numbers. He knew to what straits the garrison were now reduced, and hoped to succeed where he had so often failed.

Travis rallied his men for the last time. As he ran his eye over the remnant of his gallant band, and then looked out towards the thousands moving across the plain, he knew too well that the crisis had come, and that they could not expect to hold out against this fresh assault.

But no thought of capitulation seemed to have entered his mind; he announced his intention of dying behind the walls, and his comrades were determined to follow his example. In silence they betook themselves to the ramparts, there to await the expected attack.

The fighting that day was more fierce

and stubborn than on any previous occasion. The defenders, though so reduced in numbers and weakened by the rigours of the siege, made a desperate stand. The Mexicans first assailed the fort from the south, where their guns had done most damage; but at that point they were met by Travis himself, whose presence always seemed to inspire his comrades with renewed strength and courage. Such was their determination and pluck, they succeeded in repelling the attack, and the Mexicans were once more repulsed with heavy loss.

But the brave defenders were not given much breathing time. The assault was renewed in less than an hour, the Mexican forces now surrounding the fort on every side. They rushed to the attack with fierce yells, and fought with the fury of savages. The struggle was as brief as it was glorious. Not until the greater number of the heroes who remained within the fort had been killed one by one, not until the immortal Travis had fallen dead upon the ramparts, did the assailants succeed in gaining a footing.

Even then, though only a dozen or two of the garrison remained alive, resistance was not at an end. They fought manfully to the last, for most of them had promised their dead leader never to surrender, and they meant to keep their word. The savage conquerors showed no mercy, even to the wounded. Bowie was lying in bed, suffering from sickness and injuries, when they broke in upon him with the intention of despatching him then and there. But they caught a Tartar in the wiry little colonel, who, even in his enfeebled condition, stretched four of his assailants dead on the floor before he was slaughtered.

Crockett was one of the last to die. When they surrounded him, he fought with his clubbed rifle. He and five others—all that remained of the Alamo defenders—stood back to back, and so fierce was their resistance, they actually kept their assailants at bay until the Mexicans were glad to offer them quarter.

They were led out from the fort and brought before Santa Anna. The Mexican leader regarded the heroes with looks of fierce exultation. They must have thought then, when it was too late, that it would have gone better with them if they had shared the fate of their comrades, rather than have fallen into the hands of this tyrant.

Though the brave fellows had been promised quarter, they were led out from his presence and massacred in cold blood. The brutal instincts of the conqueror were not satisfied until he had mutilated the bodies of the slain.

So ended the siege of the Alamo. The noble defenders were exterminated, but Texas was saved, and to them the state owes its freedom and prosperity. Santa Anna marched away north, bent upon revenging his heavy losses. But Houston, who subsequently gained for himself the proud title of 'The Liberator of Texas,' had made good use of his time, and was able to get together a sufficiently strong force to meet the invader.

He encountered the Mexicans at San Jacinto, where a fierce and bloody battle was fought. The invaders were defeated, and Santa Anna

himself taken prisoner. The remnant of his scattered force retreated across the frontier, and Texas was free.

It is strange that the story of the Alamo should have been allowed to lapse into oblivion. Texas, at least, should honour the memory of those heroes, and point with pride to the spot where they made their gallant defence. The ancient Greeks or Romans would almost have deified such men. England, France, or Germany would have raised a national memorial to them. In America they have only one monument. It stands upon the scene of their glorious death, and bears two lines of grand import:

Thermopylæ had its messenger of defeat:
The Alamo had none!

A LOCAL VIEW.

CHAPTER IV.—THE MISSING WILL.

'Of course,' he observed, drawing a chair to the table, 'it is unnecessary to mention the provisions of the will, except perhaps as a formality. Mrs Dalton and her daughter are the sole beneficiaries, besides the two servants and a few other persons. The value of the residuary estate will be over thirty thousand pounds, the interest of which belongs to Mrs Dalton for life without power of anticipation; and on the death of Mrs Dalton, the trust terminates, the estate wholly passing to Miss Dalton or her heirs. I need not go into details. But the testator,' said Mr Fairfield, drawing the document from the envelope, 'was latterly disturbed by a certain apprehension, and in order to guard against'—He stopped abruptly, with a start. There was no second will.

Visibly agitated, but without speaking, Mr Fairfield looked in the drawer, and on the floor. Finding nothing, he pulled the bell, and asked for Mr Brock. The clerk soon appeared.

'You are clear,' said the lawyer, fixing his steady eyes upon the clerk, 'that you saw Mr Dalton place the two documents in that drawer?'

'Quite clear, sir,' was the emphatic reply. 'The schoolmaster and I saw the new one executed, attested the same, and when the other witness left the room, Mr Dalton requested my attention to his depositing the envelope in that drawer.'

The vicar had not left many private papers, and these were so methodically arranged as to facilitate a rapid search. It soon was made clear that no trace of the second will existed. For some reason, Mr Dalton must have changed his mind, and destroyed it. The circumstance of his retaining the documents ('for the present,' he had said) instead of giving them to Mr Brock to deposit in the solicitor's strong-box, suggested an idea of indecision quite consistent with the conclusion that he had altered his mind and destroyed the last instrument—leaving the original will as it stood and had stood for several years, bequeathing a life-interest in two-thirds of his estate to his sister-in-law, the remainder to his niece absolutely, with succession to the whole on her mother's death.

A passing thought went through the lawyer's mind, associating the destruction of the will

with the vicar's death; but there was nothing for the association to rest upon.

'After all,' he said at length—for, during the foregoing proceedings, the lady and clergyman were left ignorant of the cause of them—'after all, it is not very material. Mr Dalton had lately executed a second will, which he has evidently destroyed. That, however, made no change in the dispositions of the original will, except in postponing until her mother's death the benefit of his niece—a course to which he was impelled by a motive which had great force with him. We need not refer to it further.'

Mr Fairfield was aware of his client's fear of Farnley, and the cause of it.

'Anything that had ever been his wish,' interposed Mrs Dalton, 'must be sacred to my daughter and me.'

'But there is no obligation now,' the lawyer objected; 'the latter will does not exist.'

'There is no obligation upon you and me, as trustees,' said the clergyman, who sympathised with Mrs Dalton's feeling. 'But with Mrs Dalton and her daughter it is different. Would there be any objection to informing her? The matter is for Mrs Dalton's ears only,' he added, rising to withdraw.

'No, Mr Everard,' Mrs Dalton objected; 'do not go. You were his friend—and you are our friend, too, in accepting the burden of this trust with Mr Fairfield.'

'Since you both wish it,' said the lawyer, 'I will mention that the second will altered the dispositions of the first in regard to Miss Dalton with the view of preventing her becoming the wife of Mr Seth Farnley's son. Of course, why he altered his decision, I do not know. His retaining the two wills here, instead of sending them back to me at once, seems to indicate some uncertainty of mind.'

The theory was sufficiently plausible, and suggested an idea to the clergyman in possible explanation.

'Perhaps the intelligence that young Farnley had abandoned his escapade in foreign ports so soon, and was returning to England, made the vicar shrink from doing him a possible injustice. I know how sensitive a conscience he had.'

'Ay, that may have been,' observed the lawyer indifferently. 'I had not known young Farnley was on his way back. But Miss Dalton's welfare may be safely left in her mother's hands—a reflection which I surmise would influence Mr Dalton even more than the one you suggest.'

Even Mrs Dalton herself felt that this conjecture was nearer to the truth—it was so like the good vicar to shrink from leaving an ungenerous memory after him, even from the most praiseworthy motive.

There the matter was allowed to drop.

A carriage was waiting at the gate to take Mrs Dalton and her daughter home. In walking down the little path, the latter turned her head, either to look again at the spot where her uncle lay, or at Dr Maitland, who was still there. It was a momentary impulse. The young man saw it and hastened to hand them into the carriage. He would not at the moment have held Mary Dalton's fingers an instant

longer than was necessary, but, unconsciously, the girl held his until she was seated. And she gave him a sad and earnest look as the carriage drove away, which was more than he had ever before received from her. Mother and daughter saw him slowly return to see the last touches given to his friend's grave.

The simple action filled Mrs Dalton's eyes with tears. She had long ceased, in the pre-occupations of widowhood and widowhood, to revert to the small romance of her maiden-time; but the curtain was suddenly lifted now, and she saw that early love as it had never before appeared to her. Tears silently coursed down her face, of grateful remembrance of the tender and reverent loyalty which had lasted to the end. And the curious and unconscious thought passed through her mind, that the stranger still lingering at his grave—stranger as compared with them—deserved better of the dead than they did.

'Mary,' she said softly, 'if his spirit can return, it is—it is nearer, at this moment, to Dr Maitland than to us!'

'Yes, mamma,' was the quick, eager answer—'oh yes, yes!'

The unexpected enthusiasm of the girl's words, the sparkle of her eyes, and the colour for an instant suppressing the sadness of her face, were an irresistible prompting to the mother to take advantage while the heart was warm.

'And if—if he can see us—and know everything, Mary, should we not think how we can best please him—how we can do what he would most wish?'

'Mamma, mamma,' she answered, laying her face on her mother's shoulder, 'I know what you mean. I would have promised—last Saturday, but the messenger just came. We must wait a little now; but it shall be, all the same, when he asks me.'

Mrs Dalton kissed her daughter, and felt happier. The recollection of that passing fear of the late vicar, embodied in the destroyed will, was hovering about her. There was no fear now, and she piously prayed he might know it.

A violent outbreak of scarlet fever in the poorer quarter of Croham, and adjoining Crownley, whose outer fringe was touched by the contagion, caused Dr Maitland to second the advice of the trustees, that Mrs Dalton and her daughter should go away for a while to the sea-side. They went to the north coast of Kent, and in the quiet village of Herne Bay they spent two months. The doctor, often thinking of them amongst his many pre-occupations, was busy fighting the epidemic at home; at the sea-side, mischief was busy working a catastrophe which he was powerless to prevent.

A few days after the departure of Mrs Dalton and her daughter, a friendly and somewhat shy little letter came to Dr Maitland from the latter (it was the first she had ever written to him, and was written with a certain consciousness that, maiden-like, she was afraid of betraying), asking him to send her certain books from home which he knew of, and adding a few lines about her mother and herself. That was all, but it was very pleasant to the young

man; and the letter, deposited in an inner pocket, made his heart more sympathetic with his patients during the day. He sent the books, and told her all the news of the short interval since their departure, and slept very happily after his day's work.

Next morning he received his first awakening. Another letter from Herne Bay was on his breakfast-table.

'DEAR DOCTOR MAITLAND—Mr Fairfield writes to inquire as to the disposal of the books at the vicarage. I have referred him to you to select those which you think we would like to keep for ourselves; of the remainder, we wish Mr Everard and Mr Fairfield to choose such as they would themselves like to have as souvenirs, excepting any volumes which you may desire to have for your own shelf.

'This is a very pretty and quiet place, and we like it very much.—With kindest regards, yours sincerely,

AGNES DALTON.

'P.S.—I suppose Mary mentioned to you that Frederick Farnley has returned. He is staying here, and meets us every day.'

Mary had not mentioned the fact. The doctor drew an uneasy breath and asked himself, Why? In a moment he shook the ungenerous feeling from him. Mary Dalton was incapable of deliberate deception, even by silence. When writing to Dr Maitland she had not been thinking of young Farnley—which only showed how small a place, even as a returned prodigal, he occupied now in the girl's interest. The doctor saw no concealed warning in the mother's postscript; and waited to realise that generosity in love, at a certain critical point in the tide, is folly.

Dr Maitland would have dismissed the matter of young Farnley wholly from his mind had not the young man been brought before him in the course of the day in a new and, in truth, more alarming light. The character of a son of Seth Farnley would have required many aids foreign to its paternal source to win general confidence, and it had wanted most of these; and his late trip abroad had not strengthened his social position in that respect. This knowledge made it easier for Dr Maitland to disregard the young man as a rival now to be feared, though he would have wished to be able to keep Mary Dalton from his contact. But on this particular day he discovered what had never before been suspected—namely, that Frederick Farnley had virtues which he was very careful to conceal.

Amongst the doctor's patients was one of the children of Brock, the confidential clerk of Mr Fairfield. This was Tuesday, and the preceding day he had remarked Mrs Brock say that her husband had been away since Saturday. His return after so short an absence was not enough to account for the look of pleasure in the wife's face to-day.

'I suppose you have heard, Dr Maitland, of Mr Fred Farnley's return?' Mrs Brock said, as though communicating a piece of good news.

'Yes; he has not been long away, Mrs Brock,' he remarked, writing a prescription.

'My husband has been to Herne Bay to see

him. He never told me where he was going; but, of course, he would go to the end of the kingdom to see Mr Fred again!

'Why—of course?' Dr Maitland asked curiously.

'Ah, doctor,' she answered, a warm colour rising in her face, 'just before Mr Fred went away, when he wanted all the money his father allowed him, one of his last acts was to put his hand in his pocket and pay a debt that had hung like lead round my husband's neck for four years. It was eighty pounds; and the generous-hearted young man did not think an instant about it, and would listen to no refusal. I declare to you, doctor, my husband broke into tears in telling me of it afterwards. Good reason he had to be the first, if he could, to welcome back Mr Fred. No one ever knows the kind of heart a young man may carry under a careless outside.'

'Very true,' said the doctor thoughtfully.

'And I don't think it's ungrateful to say it,' she added. 'Mr Fred must have got his heart from his mother.'

'I think we get most of our best qualities from our mothers, Mrs Brock.'

'Next week, when Annie is better, we are all going down for ten days—I mean the children and I—to Herne Bay. It will do me good to have an opportunity of thanking Mr Fred myself, because I—I don't think my husband knows how to do it half as well as he ought.'

'Indeed, Mrs Brock, if you have an opportunity of thanking the young gentleman,' said the doctor, smiling, 'he will have no reason to doubt the sincerity of your gratitude.'

The fervid feeling of the poor woman came back to Dr Maitland in another way after he left the house and was on his way home on the completion of his fatiguing rounds. The effect of that story upon Mary Dalton, if the woman had an occasion of telling it to the girl, was a contingency not to be regarded without uneasiness. It was just the breath to fan the embers (perhaps still warm) of her former feelings for young Farmley. The situation was one of danger; but what could the doctor do? Tied to his patients, respectful of her recent grief, Maitland was powerless to move. And his reticence was the other's opportunity.

(To be continued.)

THE GARDENER-KINGS.

By W. ST CHAD BOSCAWEN.

THE reader who has followed during the last few years the course of Oriental research, must have become fairly accustomed to surprises. Each year the spade of the explorer or the skill of the decipherer seems to bring to light some new and astonishing find, enlarging and extending, often into an undreamt-of antiquity our knowledge of the past. Generally speaking, the result of these discoveries has been a great retrospective enlargement of our knowledge; but there are cases in which the reverse has taken place, and the most striking of these has been in the case of the great 'Celestial Empire.' Chinese historians had, with unblushing effrontery, claimed for their civilisation an antiquity ranging many thou-

sands of years before the Christian era. Oriental research, with its cool analytical acumen, has shattered this fabric of mandarin tradition, and the civilisation of China is now reduced to its proper position. It may be briefly described as being the oldest civilisation in existence, but not in history. The isolated position of the Celestial Empire, the unbending conservatism of its officials, and the hatred of the foreign barbarian, had all combined to give to its civilisation an artificial veneer of antiquity. Research, however, showed that these claims were in no way justified, and that even the great culture of the Flowery Land had a beginning, and that a very simple one.

It was not in the writings of Confucius or his school, the severely classical school, that the traditions of the childhood of the Empire were to be found. The great philosopher of Lû severely edited all that was mythical or from traditional sources. In the Taoist school, however, myth and tradition were less severely excluded, and it is from them that the folklore of the beginnings of China is to be gathered—and the tale is a simple one.

In about the twenty-third century before the Christian era, a body of tribes called the Bak families—formerly called the 'Hundred Families'—entered China, coming from the south-west. They were under leaders who had considerable knowledge of the elements of civilisation—far in advance of that of the aboriginal population of the Chinese Empire. They brought with them a system of writing which could not have been invented in China, and which, from its primitive forms, was manifestly derived from a cuneiform system of writing. They came, having traversed Central Asia, under organised leaders, and bringing with them many important innovations, the result of long contact with the great civilisations of South-western Asia, in the Tigro-Euphrates Valley, and in the mountains of Luristan, the seat of the ancient Elamite kingdom. The evidence of the non-Chinese origin of the civilisation of the Celestial Empire had accumulated to a great extent before any solution was afforded; but at last an explanation was forthcoming, which is rapidly becoming more and more clear. This discovery—undoubtedly one of the most important of modern times—was chiefly due to the late Dr Terrien de Lacouperie, Professor of Indo-Chinese in University College, London, who was the first to show an undoubted connection between the elements of civilisation introduced into China by the Bak tribes, or the so-called Hundred Families, and the traditions and culture of South-western Asia.

The Bak tribes entered North-west China about the middle of the twenty-third century before our era, under the leadership of a personage named Nai-Hwang-ti, a name which in its ancient form was Nakhunte. This name is exactly the same as that of the great Elamite god and hero, Nakhunte or Nakhundi, whose name is an element of so many of the kings of Elam down to the seventh century before Christ. Of this leader there are many traditions, which contain curious echoes of the traditions of the old home. He was a native of Shoden, which recalls the old Akkadian name Suedin, given to

the plain between the Elamite Mountains and the Tigris; while one name of his followers was that of Ketsa, evidently a corruption of Kasti, 'the people of the bows,' an extremely ancient name of the people of Elam. Those people of the land of 'the bow' are represented on the oldest known Babylonian monument, the 'Stela of the Vultures' in the Louvre, which carries us back to an antiquity of at least 4000 B.C. Indeed, the bow seems always to have been the token of the people of Elam, as indicated in the words of the prophet Jeremiah (xlix. 35), where he refers to 'the bow of Elam.' According to the legends of Nakhunti in China, in his reign all the generations of Shen-nung—a certain semi-mythic ruler—were dead, and his ministers oppressed the Bak tribes, who at last revolted under Nakhunti. This last statement is most important, as it brings into the field another interesting legend which these early civilisers of China must have learned in their mountain home in the highlands of South-western Asia.

Among the legends which the Bak tribes brought with them into China was one of a certain Shen-nung, the 'Imperial husbandman.' This primitive hero 'did not know his father; but he belonged to the family of Kam, "the long-robed." His mother was of the family of the rulers of Anteng, and her name, Nhemti. He was born at Tandam, and grew up near the Kam River. He received the teachings of a sage named Oho, and became known by the names of Ukut or Eket, and of Letsam, places which he inhabited for a time. He established himself in Tehen, and afterwards at Kolbut, but the people of Sosha rebelled against him; he turned his arms against them and defeated them. He built the city of Utuk, and died at the age of 120 years.' This is a legend almost every detail of which is to be found in the legends and history of the earliest of the Semitic kings of Chaldaea.

During the excavations at Aboo-Hubba—the site of the ancient city of Sippara (the Sepharvaim of the Bible)—there was discovered in the lower strata of the excavations a small mace-head, bearing the inscription, 'Sargani, King of the City, King of Agade, to the Sungod in the city of Sippara he gave.' In a cylinder inscription of Nabonidus (555 B.C.), the last of the Babylonian kings, who was of a very archaeological turn, we are told that he found in the temple of the Sungod the memorial stone of Naram Sin, the son of Sargon, which no one had seen for the long period of 3200 years. This would give to the reign of Sargon the remote antiquity of from 3750-3800 B.C. years. Sargon was, however, no mythical monarch, although the remote antiquity of his reign had caused his birth and deeds to be clothed with a certain mythical glamour. The recent explorations at Nipur, in Babylonia, by the American expedition under Dr Peters of the University of Pennsylvania, have brought to light several inscriptions both of Sargon and his son. The inscriptions of the former read, 'To Mullil (the ghost god), the Great Lord, Sargon, the King of the City, the Great King of Agade, Builder of the Temple, the House of Mullil in Nipur; so that we have undoubtedly a real historical monarch.

There is, however, a remarkable legend with regard to this king. It is inscribed upon a terra-cotta tablet found at Nineveh, and now in the collection of the British Museum. It reads: 'I am Sargon, the Mighty King, the King of Agati (Akkad). My Mother was a Princess; my Father I knew not; the brother of my Father dwelt in the Mountains. In the City of Atzipirani (outlet of two streams), which is on the Banks of the Euphrates, the Princess, my Mother conceived me; in a Secret Place she brought me Forth. She placed me in a Basket of Reeds, with Bitumen my exit she closed. She gave me to the river, which drowned me not. The river carried me along, to Akki the Irrigator it brought me. Akki the Irrigator, in the Goodness of his Heart, lifted me up; Akki the Irrigator as his own Son brought me up; Akki the Irrigator made me his Gardener; and in my Agriculture, Istar the Goddess loved me.'

Here we have a legend which is almost the same as that of Shen-nung. The Chinese name is but a corruption of the Babylonian one. Each hero knows not his father; each is born in secret near the river. The mother of Shen-nung was of the family of Anteng; Sargon's brother dwelt in the mountains—that is, in the land of Anzan, or North Elam. The Chaldaean sage is rescued by the Irrigator Akki, who teaches him the profession of gardener; while the Chinese hero receives the instructions of Ohi, and finally rules in the city of Eket, which resembles exactly the Agade or Akkad of the Babylonian inscriptions. The name of the Chinese hero is associated with two other cities—Letsam—where they dwelt for a time—and Uluk. The former is manifestly a corruption of Larsam or Larsa, the southern Heliopolis of Chaldaea; the latter, Unug or Unuk, the Uruk or Erech—the old capital of Chaldaea, which may have been built by Sargon. With such a number of almost identical names as these, it seems impossible to doubt the similarity of origin of the two legends.

We have, however, other inscriptions of the hero of Chaldaea which enable us to carry the identifications even farther. In one of these records we read that he conquered the land of Magan—that is, the peninsula of Sinai, which is probably the Tehen or Sin of the Chinese legend; and its preservation is of great interest, as this was a conquest of which the Chaldaean king was most proud.

Sargon also carried out important campaigns, as did also his successors, Naram-Sin and Alu-sarsid, in the land of Anzan or Elam, and conquered a district called Apir or Apirak, which is obviously the Khapir or Khalpirti of the Median inscriptions in the vicinity of Shushan. This name is evidently preserved in the Kolbut of the Chinese legend, especially when we see it followed by the statement: 'But the people of Sosha rebelled against his orders.' In an inscription of Kurigalsu, King of Chaldaea, we have the record of his bringing back (1400 B.C.) a talisman which had been taken away (2285 B.C.) by the Elamite King Kudur-Nakhunti; and on it he wrote the inscription: 'Kurigalsu, King of Karduniyas (Babylonia), the palace of the city of Shasha of Elam, when he had taken

(this) to Belit for his life he dedicated.' The Shasha of the inscriptions, the Sohsha of the Chinese, and the ancient Shushan, are certainly one and the same city. The age of Shen-nung is also curiously exactly two Chaldean sossi, or periods of sixty years. Taking all this accumulation of evidence together, there can exist no doubt of the identity of the two stories; the legend of Shen-nung, the royal gardener, which the Bak tribes brought with them to China in the twenty-third century, was one which they had learned in the mountain home on the borders of Elam.

As it was from Shen-nung that the Emperors of China get their title of Hwan-nung, or 'Imperial husbandman,' so it was from Sargon that the Babylonian Kings got their titles of 'the Gardener of Babylon,' or 'the Great Gardener.' We have two examples of this title—one in an inscription of Bur Sin—about 1500 B.C., who claims the title of 'the Great Gardener of Ur, who the Holy Tree of Eridu restored;' and the other the great Nebuchadnezzar (606 B.C.), who claims the title of 'the Gardener of Babylon.'

So then we see how research in the East and the Far East have helped to bring together the most ancient civilisations of the world, and to find in the legends of the Gardener-Kings a common meeting-ground of the traditions of China and Chaldaea.

THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.*

CHAPTER XXIV.

I SHOULD very much like to tell you exactly what Robert said, and what Frances said, and how he played the wooer, and how she accepted the wooing. I cannot, however, for the very sufficient reason that I have not been told, by either, what passed between them. It is enough that Frances accepted as her husband this man of the people, who will remain a man of the people though he has joined a party and now fights under the banner of his party, and is party champion. He will remain a man of the people, working for them in legislation so far as laws can help, which is not much; by teaching; by addresses; by writing. He can never cast off the early conditions of his life, nor get rid of the early impulses, nor forget the nobler ambitions. What was it that Frances said? The lesser nature puts the reward first, and the work second; the nobler nature puts the work first, and the reward second. There lies before him, unless accident prevents, a long and a successful career; the labours of the future may wear him out, though this kind of work seems to prolong life and strength; he will have beside him a woman as strong as himself in her way; full of sympathy with his work; full of admiration for his strength; a woman who loves him all the more, perhaps, because he needs, not so much as some men do, the support and encouragement of love. I think of them, not as those who cling together like the columns of a cathedral aisle, but as those who stand together side by side; but

the man looks out upon the world, and the woman looks up towards the man.

And now there only remains to tell you about the diamonds.

Robert brought her down to Wapping. She came to tea with us—the homely bourgeois five o'clock meal which Isabel prepared, just as she had prepared the little banquet for my first visit. I laughed when I saw once more this noble spread; the plate of ham in slices, the plate of shrimps, the cakes—half-a-dozen kinds of cake—the biscuits, the muffins, the buttered toast, the thin bread and butter. Isabel saw nothing to laugh at. Nor, indeed, was there. Tea, considered as a meal, is most properly graced by these delightful accompaniments. And it is the principal meal, the most social meal of the greater part of our people, and the greater part of the American people.

To this feast, then, came the Lady Frances. She came dressed like a queen, with wonderful lace and embroidery. She looked like a queen, gracious and kindly. Isabel had put on a plain white dress. She had never looked better, my dainty mistress, than when she stood, so simple and so sweet, beside that regal woman.

'George has told me about you,' said Frances, taking Isabel's hand; 'I have been wanting to make your acquaintance. My dear, we shall be cousins: we must be great friends.' So she stooped and kissed her, and I could see that she was pleased with my simple maid of Wapping Old Stairs.

Then the Captain was presented, and behaved as an honest old sailor should: full of admiration of so much beauty and grandeur, and not afraid.

Frances took off her hat, and we all sat down to tea, and were cheerful. The talking was conducted chiefly by Frances and myself. Robert sat silent, preoccupied. Only from time to time he lifted his eyes and rested them for a moment on Frances, with a softer light in them than I had ever seen before. Love doth tame speedily the most masterful of men.

Tea despatched, I took Frances over the way to see the Yard. I thought that Robert would perhaps like to say something to Isabel. What he did say was very simple and straightforward. He said, quite meekly, in the presence of the Captain: 'Isabel, I thank you for the release. You have forgiven me, I am sure, for what was meant for the best—a great mistake—a great cruelty—to you, as now I understand.'

'Oh! yes,' she said, 'it was impossible. Why did you not let me know before? But there is nothing to forgive. The gratitude remains, Robert, and the obligation—and you will be very happy, I am sure.'

'Believe me, Isabel,' he replied humbly. 'I could not be happy unless I was sure you were happy too, in the same way.'

As for me, Frances spoke very gracious words. 'George,' she said, not pretending in the least to be interested in the ribs of a barge which we were building—yet a beautiful barge—'you have brought me to this place of chips and shavings for no other purpose than merely to ask me what I think of her. Well, she seems a sweet and lovely girl—and she loves you, George. I saw it in her eyes and in her voice.'

What do you chiefly desire of life, George? Love and tranquillity, is it not?"

"Indeed, Frances, there seems nothing better to desire."

"Then you will have the desire of your heart. But, George, if you have sons, remember that you have an hereditary title. Rank has its uses, and yours may be useful to them. Perhaps your sons may aspire. I can perfectly understand how Robert came to make so great a mistake—who could bear to think of that delicate creature turned out upon the world?—and I understand why Robert desired his release; and I understand, as well, my dear George, that your Isabel will make you perfectly happy."

Looking at this little speech as it is written down in cold language, I perceive that it has a suspicion of condescension in it, as if Isabel was good enough for me, and not good enough for Robert. But one cannot convey the manner of the words, which was wholly sweet and sisterly.

So she glanced round the shed, and stepped to the edge of the quay, and looked up and down the river.

"It is all impossible, George," she said. "I cannot understand how Robert came out of such a place, or how you could go into it. Why, it is nothing more than a kind of carpenter's shop."

"By your leave, Frances, a boat-builder's yard. Chips and chunks and shavings belong to the craft of carpenter, it is true, but to that of boat-builder as well."

"Well, I am glad that Robert is out of it. I confess, my dear George, that I could not live down here, nor can I promise to come here often—perhaps never again. All this side of life, with the warehouses, the ships, the wharves, the wagons, seems to me to belong to the Service. The place is kitchen, scullery, pantry, cellars. You and I were born in the class that is served, not in the Service. I do not want so much as to see the kitchen. Yet you—well, I say no more. Curiosity brought you here; an interesting couple made you stay here; love has chained you here. Let us go back to the others."

The moment had arrived for my surprise, which I had arranged with the greatest care, so as to produce a fine dramatic effect. I took the party into the study. On the rug before the fireplace stood old John Burnikel's sea-chest, hidden by a table-cover. No one in the house, except Isabel, knew what I was doing. And even Isabel did not know why I did it.

"This, Frances," I said, "is Robert's study. In this room he learned all he knows."

"It is a beautiful old room. I had no idea that there could be among these warehouses so lovely a house. This wainscoting is worthy of any house, however fine.—So this was your room, Robert, was it?"

"This was my room.—What have you got on the floor, George?"

"You shall see directly, as soon as Frances has done admiring the walls.—Sit down, Frances; sit down, Isabel. I am going to show you something of interest.—Now, Robert, remember the last talk we had. We spoke of obstacles, did we not? In the way of a certain event of some importance to you."

"Yes, we did."

"I told you that the first obstacle was waiting for your wish to be expressed. Is that obstacle removed?"

"It is."

"The second obstacle was a difference in birth and social position which cannot be removed, but may be trampled upon."

"We have trampled upon it," said Frances, for her lover looked at her. "Robert has forgotten that there ever existed this apparent, not real, obstacle."

"There remains the third obstacle. Shall I remind you of what you said?"

"I said that it would choke me to live upon my wife's money."

"And now you say?"

"Let me say it for him," Frances rose, and placed her hand upon his shoulder. Yes, I am quite right; she will not cling to her husband, she will stand beside him—the Queen Consort. "Robert forgot that wealth is nothing. It can give me no more than a house, and servants, and carriages. It is of no other use to me. But it may be of use to Robert, and he takes it—with me. It is a part of me; he takes me altogether, just as I am. The woman herself with her heart and her soul, and her thoughts, and her abilities, if she has any, and with the woman her rank, and her family, and her wealth.—Is that so, Robert?"

"It is so, Frances," he replied humbly.

"Wealth may be useful to such a man as Robert. It is good for such a man to have a well-appointed house. Freedom from money anxieties with some men is almost a necessity.—Do you not agree, Robert?"

"You have made me understand," he said. "I thought I was asserting my independence when I was only betraying narrow prejudice. That you—you should give me money shames me no more now than that you should give me yourself, and that will shame me always." Oh, the change in Robert that he should say this!

"You know, you two," Frances went on, "I want Robert to become a great man. It is his ambition, and it is mine as well. I want him to become greater—far greater—than he allows himself to dream. I want him to be such a leader of men as has not been seen for many a century in this country: he must never be accused of mean or sordid motives: never be led aside by temptations which ruin smaller men. Oh! be certain that he will become what I think he may become. I would give not only all my heart, and all my soul, and all my strength—and all my wealth—which is nothing—but I would give my very life—my heart's blood—at this moment." She laid her hand upon his shoulder, he stooped and kissed her forehead: and in his softened eye I saw—oh! the wonder of it—actually, a tear! In Robert's eyes, a tear! This foolish love makes school-girls of us all. And Frances was splendid—she was splendid.

"Well," I said, after a moment, "things being as they are, I am inclined to stop. However, we must carry this thing through to the end. I understand, Robert, that you no longer desire that kind of equality of which we spoke the other day."

'No longer,' he replied. 'I would rather owe everything to—Frances.' It was quite pretty to notice how he dropped his voice at the very mention of her name. 'Everything,' he repeated.

'I am truly sorry, Robert,' I continued, 'to disturb an arrangement which is so beautiful. But when I told you that the obstacle of comparative income was removed, I meant more than its removal by Frances, though of that I was certain. I meant, my cousin, that I was able to place in your hands a fortune which would go far at least to equalise things.'

'What do you mean?' asked Robert.

'I am now going to show you. In fact, Robert, I am about to restore to you, as the sole and rightful heir, the Family Fortune.'

'The Family Fortune? What is that?'

'Oh! Basest of Burnikels! He has forgotten the lost bag of jewels.'

With these words I removed the tablecloth and exposed the sea-chest.

'The jewels? Is it possible that you have found them?'

'It is more than possible.—Isabel, dear child, help me to take out the contents of the chest.'

We took out everything: the sextant; the Indian things; the mummified flying-fish; the odds and ends; and laid them on the floor.

'I have done that a hundred times,' said Robert.

'What is the bag of jewels?' asked Frances.

'It is a bag full of the most lovely, precious stones,' I told her. 'Our great-great-uncle, John Burnikel, Master Mariner, possessed this treasure. How he got it I do not know. That is, a knowledge of the truth came to me in a dream, and I do know. Some day I will tell you. He used to say himself that an Indian Rajah, presumably the Great Mogul of Delhi, took him into his treasury, bade him fill his pockets with jewels in return for some signal services rendered to the Mogullian Dynasty. Well, he died, and his nephews could not find that bag anywhere, and nobody has ever been able to find it—until now. It was reserved for me to make this discovery.—Is the box quite empty, Isabel? One moment.—The nephews quarrelled over the loss, Frances; they fought, I believe; they dissolved partnership; one was my great-grandfather, and the other was Robert's. That's all the history. Now, you will observe that the box with all that it contains belongs to Robert. His great-grandfather bought or took over the old mariner's furniture. His own father bequeathed it to him. The box with all its contents, therefore, without any possible doubt or dispute, is his own.—Now then—you've got nothing to say to that, I suppose, Robert.'

'I suppose not. But why so fierce?'

'Very good. I thought you might begin advancing absurd objections about other people's imaginary rights. It's all yours. And now look at the box.—Do you see any possible hiding-place in it, Frances? See. It is empty; the sides are papered. I hold it up and turn it over. There are two compartments; both of the same depth; is there any possibility of a hiding-place?'

'I can see none,' said Frances, 'but of course

there must be. You are like a conjurer before he shows his trick. Why don't you turn up your sleeves, and assure us that there is no deception?'

'What do you think, Robert?'

'I have thought of a false bottom, and I have measured. I used to think that there is no possibility of a hiding-place. But I am now convinced that there must be, otherwise you would not talk in this way.'

'Well, look along the lower line of the pattern at the back—the thick dark line—can you discern nothing?'

'No, no. Yet, there seems to be a line not in the paper. What is that?'

'You shall see.' So I knelt down, opened my knife and slowly passed it along the almost invisible junction of the shutter or lid of which you have heard. This widened the opening.

'There is a secret pocket, after all!' cried Robert.

'There is. This is a lid with a spring which keeps it tightly pressed. You do not look for hinges at the bottom of the box, and you do not observe the line of juncture. I think it is one of the most admirable hiding-places I ever saw, and I have seen a good many. Now, Robert, I pull open this lid; you see this side of the chest is made of wood much thicker than the other side; also if you look at the outside, you will observe that it widens at the bottom. The widening is designed by the cabinet-maker who made this excellent box, for in it he has cut out a narrow little cupboard in which anything could be hidden, and where nothing could be suspected. In this cupboard—I pulled open the lid—look, Robert, lies the bag.'

I took out the bag. It was, as I have told you, more like one of those long round things which they lay on the windows in order to keep out the draught; I gave it to Robert. 'There is your fortune, Robert; you are the heir to the family fortune. It is yours and yours only.'

He received the bag with the awkwardness of one who has the most unexpected thing in the world sprung upon him.

'Pour out the contents, man,' I said. 'Let us see your treasure.'

He poured out the glittering contents on the table. There they were—diamond, ruby, emerald, turquoise, pearl, opal, chalcedony, and the rest; of all sizes from a seed pearl to a ruby as big as a pigeon's egg; diamonds worth thousands; pearls worth the ransom of an earl.

'Oh, heavens!' cried Frances. 'What are we to do with all these things?'

'They are yours,' said Robert. 'Let me give them all to you.'

'No, they are your fortune. They are yours. Stay, I will take them, Robert, in case, at any time, you may want something—I know not what. Oh! after all these years that you should find them, George. Oh! but you should have some of them.'

'Take half of them, George.'

'No,' I said. 'Your house is the best place for them, Frances. We will have none of them. Put all back in the bag; so.' I tied the mouth. 'Take it home with you, Frances.'

In the High Street of Wapping-on-the-Wall we want no diamonds, do we, Isabel?'

So she consented, and took the jewels, greatly marvelling. It was time for them to go. So we said farewell.

'We shall meet seldom, Frances,' I said. 'We are setting off along roads that never meet. Perhaps in the years to come, we may try to meet, if only to ask each other whether the obscure and tranquil life is better than the never-ending struggle in your arena.'

So the two women kissed with tears, and Robert gave me his hand, and they left me down at Wapping-on-the-Wall—a Master Craftsman—with Isabel.

THE END.

ECCENTRIC TESTATORS.

THERE is no one more capable of giving his friends a really genuine surprise than the eccentric testator. Paul Scarron, who bequeathed to his wife permission to marry again, to the Academy power to alter the French language, and to Pierre Corneille five hundred pounds of patience, was probably the most farcical of such will makers; but the race is a hardy one, and never wholly dies out. It is confined to no particular country, age, or condition of life, and there appear to be as many curious wills made nowadays as ever before.

What, for instance, could be more extraordinary in its way than the following clause in the will of a Frenchman who died recently: 'I request that my body be delivered to the Paris Gas Company for the purpose of being placed in a retort. I always used my mental power for the enlightenment of the public, and I desire that my body be used to enlighten the people after my death.'

Another Frenchman who was an enthusiastic card-player bequeathed to certain of his card-playing associates a legacy of a hundred pounds apiece on condition that, after placing a pack of cards in his coffin with his body, they bore him to the grave and stopped on the way to drink a glass of wine at a small tavern where he had spent 'so many agreeable evenings at piquet.

Still more odd, if not altogether unique, was the whim of a wealthy old bachelor who, having endured much from 'attempts made by my family to put me under the yoke of matrimony,' conceived and nursed such an antipathy to the fair sex as to impose upon his executors the duty of carrying out perhaps the most ungallant provision ever contained in a will. 'I beg,' so it ran, 'that my executors will see that I am buried where there is no woman interred either to the right or to the left of me. Should this not be practicable in the ordinary course of things, I direct that they purchase three graves and bury me in the middle one of the three, leaving the two others unoccupied.'

Cremation is no longer a novelty; but a German who was a member of an angling club in New York, in his will requested his fellow-anglers, after cremating his body, to throw his ashes into the sea on the Romer shoals of the

bay of New York, where they had often fished together. The will was carried out to the letter, and whether or not the ashes had attracted the fish cannot be known, but when the anglers next threw out their lines where they had sprinkled the ashes of their deceased friend, they certainly made an exceptionally heavy catch.

Some millionaires during their lives appear to enjoy the luxury of preparing at great expense the splendid mausoleums they wish to occupy after death. M. Lalanne, a wealthy Parisian, went to the other extreme. He had a horror of anything like ostentatious funerals, and after bequeathing over a million francs to various public institutions of his native town, he directed that his body would be buried at the cheapest possible rate, in fact, like that of a pauper. A shabby one-horse vehicle carried his remains to the *fosse commune* or common grave, and the cost of the funeral was only six francs or less than five shillings—that being the charge for the cheapest kind of funeral under the French system, where the undertaker's business is a State monopoly.

Men who have followed the hounds have at times desired to be buried in their hunting-dress, but they no longer enjoy a monopoly in this matter. A Welsh lady, who was well known as an eccentric in the vicinity of Llanrug, was recently buried there in accordance with the provisions of her will, which proved to be in keeping with the local estimate of her character. She wished to be buried in her hunting-suit, her shoes and her carriages were to be burnt on the day of her funeral, and all her horses—six in number—varying in value from £60 to £80 a head, were to be shot on the day following the funeral. The remainder of her real and personal property to the value of £90,000 was left to her 'dear husband'—a former farm-labourer on her estate, with whom some years before she had, on her own suggestion, contracted a marriage—provided that he strictly and literally carried out all the orders expressed in her will.

A horror of being buried alive so haunted Mr R—, an American, that on his death recently, he left minute instructions in his will to render such a fate impossible in his case. His body was not to be fastened up in his coffin until thirty days after his funeral, and the vault in which his body was laid was to be kept lighted and its doors left unlocked. Provision was also made to employ two men—trusted employees of the deceased—to guard the entrance, one by day and the other by night.

Tantalising conditions tacked on to legacies appear to have a special charm for some testators. An individual of this sort invited 400 intimate friends to his funeral at eight o'clock on a winter's morning. They were not previously informed, however, that every lady who attended was to have £340, and every gentleman £200 under a provision of the will, and so only twenty-nine presented themselves.

A Yorkshire gentleman left his property to be divided among those of his descendants who were not less than six feet four inches in height; and a Vienna banker made a bequest to his nephew with the stipulation that 'he shall

never, on any occasion, read a newspaper, his favourite occupation.'

The two sons of a certain Mr Henry Budd were doubtless astonished to find that their inheritance of two family estates was made conditional on their never wearing a moustache, to which personal adornment their father had a pet aversion.

While it is easy to surmise the intention of the testator in some of these arbitrary stipulations, others appear to be wholly due to pure caprice. A Russian, who died at Odessa last year, left four millions of roubles to his four nieces, but demanded that, previous to receiving the money, they should work for fifteen months either as chambermaids, washwomen, or farm-servants; this in his opinion being a salutary discipline, likely to chasten any foolish pride they might be tempted to foster in their minds.

A Brooklyn resident left seventy-one pair of trousers which were to be sold by auction—the executors being required to see that no purchaser of one pair should be allowed to bid for another. A few days after the sale it transpired that one of the purchasers had accidentally discovered ten hundred dollar bills sewn in the waistband, and each of the other purchasers on examining his bargain found himself in equal luck.

One Peter Campbell left a large sum to his son Roger on condition of his abstaining from tobacco. Dr W. F. Cumming, on the other hand, left £600 to the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, in order to provide 'poor patients, male and female, with snuff and tobacco, giving the following reason for his unusual bequest: 'I know how to feel for the suffering of those who, in addition to the irksomeness of pain and the tedium of confinement, have to endure the privation of what long habit has rendered in a great degree a necessary of life.'

There is, probably, no phase of humour good or ill, and no sentiment grateful or spiteful which has not been illustrated in testamentary documents. Mr William Dunlop devised a legacy to Parson Chevassie 'as a small token of my gratitude for the service he has done the family in taking a sister no man of taste would have,' and to another sister he left an estate because she married a minister 'whom she henpecks.'

William Darley left a shilling to his wife for 'picking my pocket of sixty guineas.' A regular and appreciative reader of a certain journal showed her gratitude in the singular but none the less acceptable legacy of £2000 to the editor who had supplied her with 'many hours of pleasant reading.'

Money is so generally welcome that it is hardly conceivable that a legacy in hard cash should ever be refused. Occasionally, however, owing to the absurdity or hardness of the conditions attached to them, substantial bequests of this kind have been refused. A sum of £200 was left to, and refused by, a gentleman because it was stipulated that he should first walk down the King's Road, Brighton, dressed in female attire.

A maiden lady over fifty, with a strong aversion to all theatrical amusements, was scandalised by being put down for a legacy in the will of a facetious friend, who tacked on

the condition that within six months of the testator's death the legatee should obtain an engagement at a London theatre and perform there one whole week.

A wife who henpecks her husband does not always come off so well as in the case already given. A Sussex publican took an odd revenge on a nagging wife whose sharp tongue had given him many a bad quarter of an hour while he lived. On his death she found that to receive any benefit from his will she must walk barefooted to the market-place each time the anniversary of his death repeated itself. Holding a candle in her hand, she was there to read a paper confessing her unseemly behaviour to her husband during his life, and stating that had her tongue been shorter her husband's days would in all probability have been longer. By refusing to comply with these terms she had to be satisfied with £20 a year 'to keep her off the parish.'

The restrictions imposed on widows and other legatees with regard to matrimony are often arbitrary, and sometimes smack of cruelty. A husband, in one case reported recently, left his widow an annual income of £1000, which was to be reduced to £800 in the event of the lady marrying again. Another reduction of £200 was to be made on the birth of the first child of the second marriage, and every additional child was to involve the further loss of £100 a year.

An eccentric uncle bequeathed all his property to six nephews and six nieces on the condition that 'every one of the nephews marries a woman named Antonie, and that every one of the nieces marries a man named Anton.' They are further required to give the Christian name Antonie or Anton to each first-born child according as it happens to be a boy or a girl. The marriage of each nephew and niece is to be celebrated on one of the St Anthony's Days, either January 17th, May 10th, or June 13th, and if, in any instance, this last provision is not complied with before July 1896, half the legacy is in that case thereby forfeited.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

OUR readers will possibly remember that some months ago an experimental boring at Shakespeare's Cliff, near Dover, proved the presence of coal in that locality, and justified the anticipation which had been formed by geologists, that the great coalfield of Belgium would be found continued on our southern coast. Kent has often been called the 'Garden of England,' so beautiful are its external features, and its inhabitants will find it difficult to realise that beneath its surface lie the necessary elements to convert it into a 'black country.' But they will presently see that this experimental stage has been passed, and the practical one entered upon. The Kent Coalfields Syndicate has been formed, its capital (£200,000) subscribed, a contract entered into for sinking two shafts, and machinery provided for winding 2500 tons per day. These works are to be completed

within the next sixteen months, and we shall then learn the probable extent of the coal beneath the Dover downs. We may feel confident that there will be many who will not be enthusiastic with regard to the success of the enterprise.

For six years a committee, under the auspices of the Society of Antiquaries, has been doing good work in the excavation of the Roman city of Silchester, about ten miles to the south-west of Reading (Berkshire), and their last year's labour has been the most prolific of any, the results having been recently exhibited at the society's rooms in London. About half the area of this British Pompeii, as it has been called, has now been thoroughly examined, and many more years' work will be required before the city has yielded up all its secrets. The committee claim that the exploration of Silchester is the beginning of the history of the civil occupation of Britain by the Romans, and they do so with some justice. One of the most recent finds is a block of wood through which pass two large and perfect lead pipes, with a channel for another pipe in front. There is no doubt whatever that this arrangement is part of a force-pump described by Vitruvius, and is the first example of Roman hydraulic apparatus discovered in this country. We may mention that in order to carry on these most interesting and important researches at Silchester, an expenditure of at least £500 per annum is necessary: it is a work worthy of generous support.

Relics of Roman London are continually being found in the course of excavating for building operations; and quite recently, in Bond Street, a number of water-pipes were unearthed which two thousand years ago were drilled out of solid blocks of bath-stone, and are still in good condition. Beside these fine pipes, which have an internal diameter of ten inches, were found some of the original water-pipes laid by the New River Company. These are simply burnt-out willow trunks, and although they are still intact, are far inferior to the Roman pipes of a date so long anterior to them.

Some four years ago astonishment was excited at the sale by the Admiralty of the *Foudroyant*. The good ship which carried Nelson's flag in 1799, and with which the names of Hardy, Sydney Smith, Warren, and Abercromby were associated, was regarded as a piece of useless lumber, and was sold for the value of the fire-wood she would make. Then one or two gentlemen, with Mr Wheatly Cobb at their head, declared that this should not be; and by dipping pretty deeply into their pockets purchased the old battleship at about three times the price for which the Admiralty sold her. The ship has been refitted in such a manner that were Nelson to see her now he would find no change, such as he would undoubtedly detect in her sister ship *The Victory*. She is fully rigged, and will carry the greater part of her original armament of eighty-eight guns, the refitting having been carried out, under careful supervision, at Erith, on the Thames. In a short time, when the work will be completed, Englishmen will have the opportunity of seeing

a line-of-battle ship under sail, a most beautiful object to look upon, and one which will call up many memories of doings which laid the foundation of Britain's proud position of ruler of the seas. Such a sight has not before been possible for nearly a century.

The number of lamp accidents in London have gradually increased from nineteen in the year 1866 to no fewer than four hundred and seventy-three in the year 1895, and it would seem almost certain that unless the legislature steps in, the increase will go on in the same ratio. In all these cases fires have occurred, and in some life has been lost; but according to the evidence of the insurance offices, quite as many small fires occur from lamp accidents, which only come to light through claims for compensation being made—it is fair, therefore, to multiply the figures above given by two. The London County Council, who have been holding an inquiry into this important question, have collected much evidence as to the dangerous character of the cheap lamps used chiefly in poor households. Many of these are made in Germany; but the Germans are far too astute to use them themselves, and the accidents in that country are, therefore, far less than they are in our own. There is no question that the sale of such lamps (those with glass containers are the worst) should be entirely prohibited. It is also recommended that the flash-point of the oil used should be raised from 73 degrees Fahr. to 120 degrees. There are now many excellent safety-lamps made; and with these accident is next to impossible, for if they fall the flame is instantly extinguished. It is of course impossible to prevent persons using dangerous lamps already in their possession, but steps could be taken to insure that no more shall be sold. It is now recommended that the Secretary of State should have power from time to time to issue an order declaring that 'after a certain date it shall be unlawful to make, expose, or offer for sale any lamp or other appliance intended to be used for the burning of mineral oil for purposes of illumination unless it be constructed in accordance with prescribed specifications,' under a penalty of, say £5.

We described in these columns some months ago a process of making guns of leather, which were designed more especially for mountain warfare; but the latest idea is to employ wood-pulp for these weapons, which, on account of its toughness and elasticity, is well calculated to withstand a heavy discharge. The gun has a steel core, and the paper-pulp is moulded round it; a jacketing of wire bound with bars of brass completing the structure. As to the paper-pulp itself, a long-fibred variety is selected, and it is mixed with litharge, wax, tallow, and white-lead, to add to its hardness.

A new use for wood-pulp has been found in the production of artificial silk; and there will shortly be established in Lancashire a factory to begin what in this country at least is quite a new industry, but which has been practised in France for some time with great success. It is even said that the French artificial silk is so like the real article that much of it has

been sold in this country, neither seller nor buyer suspecting that it did not find its origin in the cocoon of the silkworm. By certain chemical processes the pulp is reduced to a syrupy condition, and while in this state is forced through glass tubes having tiny apertures, and as the liquid threads become solid they are wound off on bobbins for the weaver. Wood-silk can be sold at a far lower price than the natural article, and great things are expected from the establishment of the new industry.

The sulphur industry of Sicily is, according to a recent report by the U.S. consul at Catania, in a very unprosperous condition, owing to over-production and low prices. Unfortunately the production cannot very well be reduced, for unless the mines are worked the water in them quickly accumulates, and they are ruined. The demand for sulphur has naturally declined since the powder factories have relinquished 'black' powder in favour of more modern explosives, and the report of great sulphur deposits having been found at Louisiana has also had its share in adding to this Sicilian depression. The mining in Sicily is still carried on by primitive methods, as may be judged when it is stated that the fusing operation has to be postponed until after harvesting the crops, so great is the amount of sulphurous acid which is allowed to escape into the atmosphere.

At the Shoe and Leather Fair recently held in London, a very wonderful sight was the model factory, in which by modern machinery the raw materials were worked up into boots at marvellous speed. From start to finish the hands of the workmen had little to do beyond passing the leather in its various stages through the machines, each machine accomplishing in a few seconds what would cost half-an-hour's hand labour under the old system. The machinery is chiefly of American design, and although it is so complex in design as to defy description, it works all but automatically. The Americans are not only ahead of this country in machine design, but also in the manufacture of leather. This is proved by the curious fact that American bullocks are brought here to be killed, but their hides go back to the States to be made into leather for the English market. Time was, when it took three whole years for a bullock's hide to be converted into leather. Now it is affirmed that the animal may be grazing on Saturday, and its hide turned into serviceable leather by the following Tuesday! The product is probably not so good as that made in the old-fashioned way, but it is not bad.

Mr James Macdonald, of Dundas Street, Edinburgh, has introduced a patent safety oil blast lamp, which will be invaluable to plumbers, coppersmiths, braziers, electrical engineers, and other workers with metals. Its principal purpose is for soldering and making what are called wiped joints, without the danger and dirt inseparable from the use of coal and chauffer. Naphtha or benzoline is used in the lamp, and the liquid is vaporised and applied in the form of a smokeless and intensely hot tongue of flame, by means of a foot bellows. This new tool will be especially valued for plumbers' work on roofs, where the

presence of a fire for heating ladle and irons is fraught with so much danger. It may be remembered that only a few years ago the roof of Canterbury Cathedral was partly destroyed by fire, the accident being caused by a plumber's chauffer.

The ravages of the May-beetle, or Cockchafer as it is generally called, are not unknown in this country, where in its mature, winged condition it does mischief to the trees, or in its larval stage it feeds voraciously upon roots of various kinds. But in France its numbers are so much greater that a regular campaign is waged against the creature, and it is destroyed wholesale. This periodical war against the cockchafer is the only way of keeping it in check; and so much is its importance recognised, that in many districts the children are allowed to attend school an hour late, so that they may take part in the hunt. In the district of Meaux, last year, more than thirty-four tons of cockchafers were slain, the product of fifty-one parishes; and in 1892 one hundred and twenty tons were collected in one hundred and twenty-four parishes. The villagers earn about one halfpenny for every pound of cockchafers they collect, and the bodies of the insects are mixed with quicklime and turned into a valuable manure.

From experiments which we have recently seen, we should judge that the Röntgen X-rays will afford a very valuable aid to naturalists in the study of small animal structures, especially those of fishes. The skeleton is pictured with marvellous accuracy of detail without dissection, and in many cases the forms of various organs can be traced. Thus, in the case of those fishes which are furnished with an air-bladder, to enable them to rise or sink in the water, this organ is invariably most distinctly shown. The dissection of a fish and the setting up of its skeleton is a work of art of which few naturalists are capable, and this new and wonderful method of picturing hidden things will often render such work unnecessary.

During the French Revolution of 1798, the coinage became to some extent degraded, and 'white' sous were issued, coins of a peculiar golden yellow colour, the exact composition of which was a mystery; they were probably made of any mixture of metals which were readily available. Mr Hartley, F.R.S., has recently analysed one of these 'white' sous, and the method he adopted was a most ingenious one, and may possibly have many other applications, for it has the peculiar merit of not robbing or in the slightest way injuring the object under examination. By means of an induction coil the operator obtains a spark discharge direct from the coin or other metallic object to be examined, and photographs the spectrum shown by the spark. By afterwards comparing this photograph with a series of quantitative spectra, in which solutions of known strength yield spectra with a certain number of lines of definite length and strength, the relative proportions of the metals forming an alloy can be measured. In the case of the 'white' sou, it was found, omitting fractions, to consist of copper 72, lead 14, zinc 13, and iron 1 per cent. The author of this

refined method of analysis points out that it will be useful in determining the composition of antique jewellery as well as coins.

Mr W. Mills, of Forest Hill, London, has invented a means of producing iron and steel which is said to possess many advantageous features. Briefly, the process consists in preparing the iron in a state of atomic division, and then mixing it with as much carbon as may be necessary to produce the grade of metal required, afterwards fusing the mixture in a crucible. Iron and steel made by this process form with aluminium and other metals alloys which are quite different from those obtained with ordinary iron and steel, the difference being due to the absence of occluded oxides of carbon. If alloyed with from 8 to 10 per cent. of aluminium, the metal does not rust, nor is it corroded by smokeless powder if it be employed for gunnery purposes. This new iron is less costly to make than ordinary pig-iron, it is very tough, and, unlike ordinary cast-iron, is malleable, and it can be converted into the finest grades of tool steel.

The excitement attending the introduction of self-propelled vehicles for common roads shows no sign of abatement, and two important exhibitions where the auto-cars can be seen in action have been opened—one at the Crystal Palace, and the other at the Imperial Institute, London. At the Royal Agricultural Society's next meeting at Manchester, under the presidency of the Duke of York, two prizes of £100 and two of £50 will be offered for motor cars for light and heavy loads. In awarding these prizes the judges will be guided by the adaptability of the vehicles to public convenience, the ease with which they can be handled with regard to starting, reversing, and stopping, economy in working, and strength, simplicity, and lightness.

A curious method of instantaneously producing aerated, or soda water, as it is commonly termed, was shown at the last conversazione of the Royal Society by Messrs Read, Campbell & Co. The apparatus consists of a soda-water bottle with a special form of stopper. The bottle having been filled with water, an 'aerator'—which consists of a little ball of sheet-steel charged with liquid carbonic acid—is inserted into its neck, and the act of closing the stopper pierces the ball and sets free the gas, which is at once dissolved in the water. It is obvious that any other liquid can be aerated in the same ingenious way.

'The electrical aerial torpedo' is the title given to a new death-dealing device which has been invented by an American engineer; but on examination it does not seem to be quite as terrible as it sounds. Its principal part is a small gas balloon, capable of lifting a weight of 40 pounds to a height of 1000 feet. This balloon has attached to it a spark-producer which can be made to explode the gas at any predetermined time. The balloon carries with it a charge of dynamite or other explosive which will ignite by percussion on falling from a height. The manner in which this engine of destruction is employed is as follows: The place which is to be operated upon, a fort or other building, is approached as nearly as

possible, and the balloon filled from a compressed-gas cylinder. The direction and velocity of the wind is next ascertained, and the time device set accordingly, so that when the balloon has travelled a certain distance it will suddenly collapse, and the explosive charge will drop on the object desired. All things considered, it would probably drop on something else.

Mr Andrew W. Tuer has written an interesting early chapter in the history of our national education, which he has enshrined in two sumptuous volumes, bound in vellum, and characteristically illustrated, entitled *The History of the Hornbook*. Thanks to the press, some one hundred and fifty-five hornbooks have been unearthed, of which there are three in the British Museum and eleven in South Kensington Museum. The hornbook was a small alphabet book, or board of oak, of varying dimensions, on which were printed the alphabet, nine digits, and sometimes the Lord's Prayer. It had a handle, and a thin sheet of horn in front to keep it from soiling, and the back was sometimes ornamented with a rude sketch of St George and the Dragon. A narrow frame or border of brass kept the horn in position on the board. An alphabet tablet came to be known as a hornbook whether protected by horn or not. The earliest record of hornbooks occurs about 1450; they well-nigh disappeared at the end of the eighteenth century, although there are still persons living who have used them. Whilst some have been picked up for a trifle, the Bateman hornbook fetched £65 at an auction. It consists of a thin board of oak, with leather stamped with an equestrian portrait of Charles I. The front paper, with alphabet and Lord's Prayer, is in black letter, protected by a piece of transparent horn, secured by tacks. Mr Tuer lately bought a black-letter example, found under the flooring of a house near Bristol, for £6, 10s. The cruciform shape is scarcest. In Scotland the hornbook was called the 'A B Brod,' and Burns has a reference to it in the title of his poem, 'Death and Dr Hornbook.' Specimens of the hornbook and of A B C boards are recessed in the covers of the book.

A LITTLE MISTAKE.

By WALTER NATHAN.

It is well known that in legal matters lawyers often commit the most egregious blunders, and at least three Judges and one Lord Chancellor have had their wills disputed. Only recently an eminent Q.C., an ornament of the Chancery Bar, left a will so very abstruse in its construction that his family, all being on the most friendly terms, called in three of his late confidères to determine how the provisions of the will should be carried out. Their decision in the matter is worthy of being transcribed:

(Private and Confidential.)

'LONDON, 15th March 189-.

'DEAR MRS ———, We regret that, after considerable deliberation, we are quite unable to

arrive at a conclusion as to the manner our late friend wished to bequeath his estate, and can only suggest that probate be paid according to the demands of the Legacy and Succession Duty Department, and that the estate be then apportioned by you in the manner in which you believe your late husband desired: taking for your guide in the matter his various conversations with you on the subject, and altogether ignoring the provisions of the will. —With kind regards, yours sincerely,

(Signed) { A.
B.
C. }

A striking example of the proverb, 'A man who is his own lawyer has a fool for a client!' That doctors commit mistakes as well as lawyers is not so generally known, although cases from time to time find their way into the newspapers. Dr Carpenter, who may be said to have introduced the scientific study of human physiology into England, burnt himself to death, while attempting to take a Turkish bath in his own room by enveloping himself in a blanket and sitting over a spirit-lamp. However, when a man poisons himself, it is his own peculiar business which is involved; but when he takes to poisoning others, not with any malicious intent, but simply in error, a natural apprehension may well pervade the public mind. Protection in the matter is extremely simple, as the following narrative will show.

About eight o'clock on a June evening, a victoria, drawn by a pair of high-stepping bay horses, drove up to a celebrated chemist's shop in Bond Street, and an elegantly dressed lady of about twenty-five years of age descended from the carriage. She walked hurriedly through the shop into the dispensing department, and throwing a piece of paper on the counter, said:

'Please make up this prescription and send it at once. I would wait and take it myself, but I am just going out to dinner; it is very important.'

The assistant bowed, took up the prescription, and then seemed to hesitate.

'Well,' said the lady, who seemed of a highly nervous, irritable disposition, 'well, what is the matter?'

'I am afraid, madam,' returned the assistant, 'that I cannot dispense this prescription.'

'Oh, nonsense,' replied the lady; 'that is what they said at — in Mayfair, so I brought it on here. I suppose Dr Blank knows what he prescribes.'

'Doubtless, madam; but although Dr Blank is one of the most eminent of his profession, I dare not make up this prescription, as the strength at which the drug is here ordered is not allowed by the British Pharmacopœia.'

'Oh, nonsense,' repeated the lady, commencing to patter on the floor with her small foot; 'this is monstrous. Here is my husband waiting for medicine of the utmost importance to his condition, and two chemists' assistants think they know better what is good for him than

one of the leading men of the College of Physicians. Give me the prescription, and I will get it prepared elsewhere.'

The assistant was loth to part with the paper.

'If you will allow me, madam,' he said, 'I will take a cab to Dr Blank's, and if he confirms the prescription, I will then prepare it.'

'No, I will not,' returned the lady, who was now in a state of extreme irritation, 'I will not; my husband is in a serious condition, and I shall be late for dinner. I have already lost half an hour, and I cannot have further delay.' With that she snatched up the prescription, and hurried out.

The assistant was seriously perturbed. The mistake in the prescription was a grave one, so grave indeed that the administration of a single dose would probably prove fatal within two hours. It was possible that some young or inexperienced assistant at some small chemist's, overawed by the great name of the physician, and by the lady's imperious manner, and elegant attire and equipage, would be found to dispense it. Then trouble would ensue, which might be stopped now. Thinking thus, the assistant told his fellow-worker in the dispensary that he would go to Dr Blank's, and hurrying into Bond Street, jumped into the first passing hansom, and in five minutes was ringing the bell of the doctor's house in Harley Street. The footman who opened the door said Dr Blank was out.

'Where was he?'

Really the footman did not know. 'Very important was it?'

Ah! well, then, he (the footman) must inquire. This he leisurely proceeded to do, and the chemist's assistant, who was of an imaginative turn, amused himself by picturing meanwhile the death of the patient, the professional ruin of himself, the Mayfair chemist, and the great physician, the grief and self-reproach of the lady, who, despite her wayward, irritable, and careless demeanour, was evidently fond of her husband; and he had already arrived at the coroner's jury's verdict of manslaughter, when the footman returned with the intelligence that his master was dining in Maida Vale. The cab soon whirled the errant knight of the pestle and mortar into the Edgeware Road, and drew up at one of the large houses which lie on the right-hand side of Maida Vale, immediately after passing the Canal. Dinner was evidently in full progress, and the footman showed the assistant into an ante-room with no very good grace. Here another wait occurred, which preyed on the already irritated nerves of our friend, even more than the previous one at Harley Street. At last the door opened, and the doctor entered. He was a dapper little man, about five feet five in height, with a pale, thin face, and hair and moustache the colour of tow. His clear, steel-blue gray eyes saved his appearance from being insignificant. He looked inquiringly at the assistant, who, bowing, said:

'I am a dispenser, sir, at Messrs —. At about eight o'clock this evening a lady, Mrs —, presented a prescription, signed by you, in which Potassi Arsenica was ordered in three drachm doses.'

'Good God!' cried the physician; 'is it possible?'

'There can be no doubt of it,' replied the assistant, 'as the prescription was refused by another chemist.'

The doctor walked hurriedly up and down the room.

'Can it have been altered?' he muttered.

'I looked carefully for that, but there was not the slightest sign of an erasure. No, sir,' continued the assistant; 'I am afraid it is a little mistake on your part. I only fear that it may be made up and administered, and therefore went at once to your house, and learning where you were, came on here.'

'Quite right, quite right,' said the doctor; 'have you a cab waiting? That's well. I'll go with you at once to the patient.'

It took but a few minutes for the doctor to make his excuses, and return ready for departure, and the cab once more in motion, turned towards the neighbourhood of Eaton Square. The house at which it now pulled up betokened far greater wealth than either of the other two at which it had stopped since chartered in Bond Street; but an air of quietude, peculiar to residences in which lie invalids in very critical condition, pervaded the place. The street door was opened noiselessly by a footman before the occupants of the cab were fairly on the doorstep, and the doctor was shown into a room on the ground-floor which answered the purposes of a library as much as such rooms usually do in London houses.

'Send me Nurse Moore,' said the doctor.

'Nurse Moore is out for exercise,' replied the footman. 'Nurse Norris is on duty, I happen to know, for she took the new medicine which I carried up not five minutes ago.'

Dr Blank was a little man, and little men are usually quick in their motion; but never did man, little or big, fly up the stairs at the same rate as he did before the last words were out of the footman's mouth. The assistant followed, but had only reached the first floor when the doctor entered the bedroom on the second. Nurse Norris was standing by the bed measuring a dose of medicine from a bottle. She was a tall, dark young woman of twenty-five, very pleasant-looking, and apparently pursuing her vocation with care, as she did not even look up when the doctor entered.

'None of that, nurse!' exclaimed the doctor.

'I beg pardon, sir?' said the nurse, now aroused to the sense of some incongruity in the physician's manner, which became intensified when a strange young man, very much out of breath, almost fell into the room from the passage.

'I should say how is the patient? A very warm night, and likely to render him uncomfortable,' continued the doctor, with his soul in his eyes, and his eyes on the bottle.

'I think I am a little better, doctor,' said a weak voice from the bed, on which lay a man of about thirty with the peculiarly emaciated and drawn look which invariably follows a prolonged or very severe illness, 'a little easier.'

'That's right,' said the doctor, feeling the invalid's pulse, 'that's right; yes, a marked im-

provement.' Then, having completed a rather lengthy examination, he turned to the nurse. 'A decided improvement, nurse; for to-night we will discontinue all drugs; give nothing except his usual nourishment until I come again. Dr W—— will return to-morrow, and when we have a local practitioner once more in attendance you will take your instructions from him; in the meantime give no medicine. Indeed I will take it with me.' And without noticing the hurt and resentful look of the nurse, the doctor pounced on the bottle and transferred it to his coat pocket.

On that particular June evening the assistant at Messrs —— had been gravely cogitating whether he would be justified in wedding the girl of his choice, who was too delicate to be able to add to the common purse, on a salary of £100 a year, and had decided in the negative. Six months after, a quiet but very happy wedding party returned to a very flourishing chemist's shop in the neighbourhood of Cavendish Square, which bore the name of the assistant over the front as its proprietor. And if you have ever occasion to consult the great physician, you may be sure that, whatsoever his opinion of your case may be, he will add, as he hands you your prescription: 'Be sure you have it made up at a good chemist's. Mr —— is an extremely careful dispenser, and in addition personally analyses every drug which goes into his place. Thank you. Good-morning.'

EVENING MYSTERY.

A LONELY landscape; far in distant skies
A stormy sunset paints its sullen hues;
And low the shadow-haunted valley lies
Bathed in the sweat of dews.

Gaunt trees with strange weird outlines blur the sky;
No sign of life is visible anywhere.
Save a disbanded flock of sheep who lie
In fitful slumber there.

A chill white vapour rises from the ground,
And steals like some grim host of sheeted dead.
Along the awe-struck vale; there is no sound
To break the silence dread.

Behind low clouds, in dim ethereal space
The scared young moon withdraws in pale affright;
What is the mystery she dare not face
That holds in spell the night?

CHARLES H. BARSTOW.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the *writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.*
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.